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THE

WORKS

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

EDMUND BURKE,

COLLECTED IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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SUBSTANCE

C O N T E N T S

O F

V O L. III.

SUBSTANCE

OF

MR. BURKE'S SPEECH

IN THE

DEBATE ON THE ARMY ESTIMATES,

IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

On Tuesday, the 9th Day of February, 1790.

COMPREHENDING A DISCUSSION OF THE PRESENT SITUATION OF AFFAIRS IN FRANCE.

SUBSTANCE OF THE SPEECH,

&c. &c. &c.

SUBSTANCE OF THE SPEECH,

&c. &c.

MR. BURKE's ſpeech on the report of the army has not been correctly ſtated in ſome of the public papers. It is of conſequence to him not to be miſunderſtood. The matter which incidentally came into diſcuſſion is of the moſt ſerious importance. It is thought that the heads and ſubſtance of the ſpeech will anſwer the purpoſe ſufficiently. If in making the abſtract, through defect of memory, in the perſon who now gives it, any difference at all ſhould be perceived from the ſpeech as it was ſpoken, it will not, the editor imagines, be found in any thing which may amount to a retraction of the opinions he then maintained, or to any ſoftening in the expreſſions in which they were conveyed.

Mr. Burke ſpoke a conſiderable time in anſwer to various arguments which had been inſiſted upon by Mr. Grenville and Mr. Pitt, for keeping an increaſed peace eſtabliſhment, and againſt an improper jealouſy of the miniſters, in whom a full confidence, ſubject to reſponſibility, ought to be placed, on account of their knowledge of the real ſituation of affairs; the exact ſtate of which it frequently happened, that they could not diſcloſe, without violating the conſtitutional and political ſecreſy, neceſſary to the well-being of their country.

Mr. Burke ſaid in ſubſtance, "that confidence might become a vice, and jealouſy a virtue, according to circum-

ſtances. That confidence, of all public virtues, was the moſt dangerous, and jealouſy in an Houſe of Commons, of all public vices, the moſt tolerable; eſpecially where the number and the charge of ſtanding armies, in time of peace, was the queſtion.

That in the annual mutiny bill, the annual army was declaredly to be for the purpoſe of preſerving the balance of power in Europe. The propriety of its being larger or ſmaller depended, therefore, upon the true ſtate of that balance. If the increaſe of peace eſtabliſhments demanded of parliament agreed with the manifeſt appearance of the balance, confidence in miniſters, as to the particulars, would be very proper. If the increaſe was not at all ſupported by any ſuch appearance, he thought great jealouſy might, and ought to be, entertained on that ſubject.

That he did not find, on a review of all Europe, that, politically, we ſtood in the ſmalleſt degree of danger from any one ſtate or kingdom it contained; nor that any other foreign powers than our own allies were likely to obtain a conſiderable preponderance in the ſcale.

That France had hitherto been our firſt object, in all conſiderations, concerning the balance of power. The preſence or abſence of France totally varied every ſort of ſpeculation relative to that balance.

That France is, at this time, in a political light, to be conſidered as expunged out of the ſyſtem of Europe. Whether ſhe could ever appear in it again, as a leading power, was not eaſy to determine: but at preſent he conſidered France as not politically exiſting; and moſt aſſuredly it would take up much time to reſtore her to her former active exiſtence—*Gallos quoque in bellis floruiſſe audivimus*, might poſſibly be the language of the riſing generation. He did not mean to deny that it was our duty to keep our eye on that nation,

and to regulate our preparation by the ſymptoms of her recovery.

That it was to her *ſtrength*, not to her *form of government* which we were to attend; becauſe republics, as well as monarchies, were ſuſceptible of ambition, jealouſy, and anger, the uſual cauſes of war.

But if, while France continued in this ſwoon, we ſhould go on increaſing our expences, we ſhould certainly make ourſelves leſs a match for her, when it became our concern to arm.

It was ſaid, that as ſhe had ſpeedily fallen, ſhe might ſpeedily riſe again. He doubted this. That the fall from an height was with an accelerated velocity; but to lift a weight up to that height again was difficult, and oppoſed by the laws of phyſical and political gravitation.

In a political view, France was low indeed. She had loſt every thing, even to her name.

" *Jacet ingens littore truncus,*
" *Avolſumque humeris* caput, *et ſine* nomine *corpus**."

He was aſtoniſhed at it—he was alarmed at it—he trembled at the uncertainty of all human greatneſs.

Since the Houſe had been prorogued in the ſummer much work was done in France. The French had ſhewn them-

* Mr. Burke, probably, had in his mind the remainder of the paſſage, and was filled with ſome congenial apprehenſions:

" Hæc finis Priami fatorum; hic exitus illum
" Sorte tulit, Trojam incenſam, & prolapſa videntem
" Pergama; tot quondam populis, terriſque, ſuperbum
" Regnatorem Aſiæ. Jacet ingens littore truncus,
" Avolſumque humeris caput, & ſine nomine corpus.
" *At me* tum primum ſævus circumſtetit horror;
" Obſtupui: *ſubiit chari genitoris imago*"——

ſelves

ſelves the ableſt architects of ruin that had hitherto exiſted in the world. In that very ſhort ſpace of time they had completely pulled down to the ground, their monarchy; their church; their nobility; their law; their revenue; their army; their navy; their commerce; their arts; and their manufactures. They had done their buſineſs for us as rivals, in a way in which twenty Ramilies or Blenheims could never have done it. Were we abſolute conquerors, and France to lie proſtrate at our feet, we ſhould be aſhamed to ſend a commiſſion to ſettle their affairs, which could impoſe ſo hard a law upon the French, and ſo deſtructive of all their conſequence as a nation, as that they had impoſed upon themſelves.

France, by the mere circumſtance of its vicinity, had been, and in a degree always muſt be, an object of our vigilance, either with regard to her actual power, or to her influence and example. As to the former, he had ſpoken; as to the latter, (her example) he ſhould ſay a few words: for by this example our friendſhip and our intercourſe with that nation had once been, and might again, become more dangerous to us than their worſt hoſtility.

In the laſt century, Louis the Fourteenth had eſtabliſhed a greater and better diſciplined military force than ever had been before ſeen in Europe, and with it a perfect deſpotiſm. Though that deſpotiſm was proudly arrayed in manners, gallantry, ſplendor, magnificence, and even covered over with the impoſing robes of ſcience, literature, and arts, it was, in government, nothing better than a painted and gilded tyranny; in religion, an hard ſtern intolerance, the fit companion and auxiliary to the deſpotic tyranny which prevailed in its government. The ſame character of deſpotiſm inſinuated itſelf into every court of Europe—the ſame ſpirit of diſproportioned magnificence—the ſame love of ſtanding

armies, above the ability of the people. In particular, our then ſovereigns, King Charles and King James, fell in love with the government of their neighbour, ſo flattering to the pride of kings. A ſimilarity of ſentiments brought on connections equally dangerous to the intereſts and liberties of their country. It were well that the infection had gone no farther than the throne. The admiration of a government flouriſhing and ſucceſsful, unchecked in its operations, and ſeeming therefore to compaſs its objects more ſpeedily and effectually, gained ſomething upon all ranks of people. The good patriots of that day, however, ſtruggled againſt it. They ſought nothing more anxiouſly than to break off all communication with France, and to beget a total alienation from its councils and its example; which, by the animoſity prevalent between the abettors of their religious ſyſtem and the aſſertors of ours, was, in ſome degree, effected.

This day the evil is totally changed in France: but there is an evil there. The diſeaſe is altered; but the vicinity of the two countries remains, and muſt remain; and the natural mental habits of mankind are ſuch, that the preſent diſtemper of France is far more likely to be contagious than the old one; for it is not quite eaſy to ſpread a paſſion for ſervitude among the people: but in all evils of the oppoſite kind our natural inclinations are flattered. In the caſe of deſpotiſm there is the *fœdum crimen ſervitutis*; in the laſt the *falſa* ſpecies *libertatis*; and accordingly, as the hiſtorian ſays, *pronis auribus accipitur*.

In the laſt age we were in danger of being entangled by the example of France in the net of a relentleſs deſpotiſm. It is not neceſſary to ſay any thing upon that example. It exiſts no longer. Our preſent danger from the example of a people, whoſe character knows no medium, is, with regard

gard to government, a danger from anarchy; a danger of being led through an admiration of ſucceſsful fraud and violence, to an imitation of the exceſſes of an irrational, unprincipled, proſcribing, confiſcating, plundering, ferocious, bloody, and tyrannical democracy. On the ſide of religion, the danger of their example is no longer from intolerance, but from atheiſm; a foul, unnatural vice, foe to all the dignity and conſolation of mankind; which ſeems in France, for a long time, to have been embodied into a faction, accredited, and almoſt avowed.

Theſe are our preſent dangers from France: but, in his opinion, the very worſt part of the example ſet is, in the late aſſumption of citizenſhip by the army, and the whole of the arrangement, or rather diſarrangement of their military.

He was ſorry that his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox) had dropped even a word expreſſive of exultation on that circumſtance; or that he ſeemed of opinion that the objection from ſtanding armies was at all leſſened by it. He attributed this opinion of Mr. Fox entirely to his known zeal for the beſt of all cauſes, Liberty. That it was with a pain inexpreſſible he was obliged to have even the ſhadow of a difference with his friend, whoſe authority would be always great with him, and with all thinking people—*Quæ maxima ſemper cenſetur nobis, et* erit *quæ maxima ſemper*—His confidence in Mr. Fox was ſuch, and ſo ample, as to be almoſt implicit. That he was not aſhamed to avow that degree of docility. That when the choice is well made, it ſtrengthens inſtead of oppreſſing our intellect. That he who calls in the aid of an equal underſtanding, doubles his own. He who profits of a ſuperior underſtanding, raiſes his powers to a level with the height of the ſuperior underſtanding he unites with. He had found the benefit of ſuch a junction, and would not lightly depart from it. He wiſhed almoſt, on all occaſions,

that

that his ſentiments were underſtood to be conveyed in Mr. Fox's words; and that he wiſhed, as amongſt the greateſt benefits he could wiſh the country, an eminent ſhare of power to that right honourable gentleman; becauſe he knew that, to his great and maſterly underſtanding, he had joined the greateſt poſſible degree of that natural moderation, which is the beſt corrective of power; that he was of the moſt artleſs, candid, open, and benevolent diſpoſition; diſintereſted in the extreme; of a temper mild and placable, even to a fault; without one drop of gall in his whole conſtitution.

That the houſe muſt perceive, from his coming forward to mark an expreſſion or two of his beſt friend, how anxious he was to keep the diſtemper of France from the leaſt countenance in England, where he was ſure ſome wicked perſons had ſhewn a ſtrong diſpoſition to recommend an imitation of the French ſpirit of reform. He was ſo ſtrongly oppoſed to any the leaſt tendency towards the *means* of introducing a democracy like theirs, as well as to the *end* itſelf, that much as it would afflict him, if ſuch a thing could be attempted, and that any friend of his could concur in ſuch meaſures, (he was far, very far, from believing they could); he would abandon his beſt friends, and join with his worſt enemies to oppoſe either the means or the end; and to reſiſt all violent exertions of the ſpirit of innovation, ſo diſtant from all principles of true and ſafe reformation; a ſpirit well calculated to overturn ſtates, but perfectly unfit to amend them.

That he was no enemy to reformation. Almoſt every buſineſs in which he was much concerned, from the firſt day he ſat in that houſe to that hour, was a buſineſs of reformation; and when he had not been employed in correcting, he had been employed in reſiſting abuſes. Some traces of this ſpirit in him now ſtand on their ſtatute book. In his

opinion, any thing which unneceſſarily tore to pieces the contexture of the ſtate, not only prevented all real reformation, but introduced evils which would call, but, perhaps, call in vain, for new reformation.

That he thought the French nation very unwiſe. What they valued themſelves on, was a diſgrace to them. They had gloried (and ſome people in England had thought fit to take ſhare in that glory) in making a revolution; as if revolutions were good things in themſelves. All the horrors, and all the crimes of the anarchy which led to their revolution, which attend its progreſs, and which may virtually attend it in its eſtabliſhment, paſs for nothing with the lovers of revolutions. The French have made their way through the deſtruction of their country, to a bad conſtitution, when they were abſolutely in poſſeſſion of a good one. They were in poſſeſſion of it the day the ſtates met in ſeparate orders. Their buſineſs, had they been either virtuous, or wiſe, or had been left to their own judgment, was to ſecure the ſtability and independence of the ſtates, according to thoſe orders, under the monarch on the throne. It was then their duty to redreſs grievances.

Inſtead of redreſſing grievances, and improving the fabric of their ſtate, to which they were called by their monarch, and ſent by their country, they were made to take a very different courſe. They firſt deſtroyed all the balances and counterpoiſes which ſerve to fix the ſtate, and to give it a ſteady direction; and which furniſh ſure correctives to any violent ſpirit which may prevail in any of the orders. Theſe balances exiſted in their oldeſt conſtitution; and in the conſtitution of this country; and in the conſtitution of all the countries in Europe. Theſe they raſhly deſtroyed, and then they melted down the whole into one incongruous, ill-connected maſs.

When

When they had done this, they inſtantly, with the moſt atrocious perfidy and breach of all faith among men, laid the axe to the root of all property, and conſequently of all national proſperity, by the principles they eſtabliſhed, and the example they ſet, in confiſcating all the poſſeſſions of the church. They made and recorded a ſort of *inſtitute* and *digeſt* of anarchy, called the rights of man, in ſuch a pedantic abuſe of elementary principles as would have diſgraced boys at ſchool; but this declaration of rights was worſe than trifling and pedantic in them; as by their name and authority they ſyſtematically deſtroyed every hold of authority by opinion, religious or civil, on the minds of the people. By this mad declaration they ſubverted the ſtate; and brought on ſuch calamities as no country, without a long war, has ever been known to ſuffer, and which may in the end produce ſuch a war, and, perhaps, many ſuch.

With them the queſtion was not between deſpotiſm and liberty. The ſacrifice they made of the peace and power of their country was not made on the altar of freedom. Freedom, and a better ſecurity for freedom than that they have taken, they might have had without any ſacrifice at all. They brought themſelves into all the calamities they ſuffer, not that through them they might obtain a Britiſh conſtitution; they plunged themſelves headlong into thoſe calamities, to prevent themſelves from ſettling into that conſtitution, or into any thing reſembling it.

That if they ſhould perfectly ſucceed in what they propoſe, as they are likely enough to do, and eſtabliſh a democracy, or a mob of democracies, in a country circumſtanced like France, they will eſtabliſh a very bad government—a very bad ſpecies of tyranny.

That, the worſt effect of all their proceeding was on their military, which was rendered an army for every purpoſe but

that of defence. That, if the queſtion was, whether ſoldiers were to forget they were citizens, as an abſtract propoſition, he could have no difference about it; though, as it is uſual, when abſtract principles are to be applied, much was to be thought on the manner of uniting the character of citizen and ſoldier. But as applied to the events which had happened in France, where the abſtract principle was cloathed with its circumſtances, he thought that his friend would agree with him, that what was done there furniſhed no matter of exultation, either in the act or the example. Theſe ſoldiers were not citizens; but baſe hireling mutineers, and mercenary ſordid deſerters, wholly deſtitute of any honourable principle. Their conduct was one of the fruits of that anarchic ſpirit, from the evils of which a democracy itſelf was to be reſorted to by thoſe who were the leaſt diſpoſed to that form as a ſort of refuge. It was not an army in corps and with diſcipline, and embodied under the reſpectable patriot citizens of the ſtate in reſiſting tyranny. Nothing like it. It was the caſe of common ſoldiers deſerting from their officers, to join a furious, licentious populace. It was a deſertion to a cauſe, the real object of which was to level all thoſe inſtitutions, and to break all thoſe connections, natural and civil, that regulate and hold together the community by a chain of ſubordination; to raiſe ſoldiers againſt their officers; ſervants againſt their maſters; tradeſmen againſt their cuſtomers; artificers againſt their employers; tenants againſt their landlords; curates againſt their biſhops; and children againſt their parents. That this cauſe of theirs was not an enemy to ſervitude, but to ſociety.

He wiſhed the houſe to conſider, how the members would like to have their manſions pulled down and pillaged, their perſons abuſed, inſulted, and deſtroyed; their title deeds brought out and burned before their faces, and themſelves

and

and their families driven to ſeek refuge in every nation throughout Europe, for no other reaſon than this; that without any fault of theirs, they were born gentlemen, and men of property, and were ſuſpected of a deſire to preſerve their conſideration and their eſtates. The deſertion in France was to aid an abominable ſedition, the very profeſſed principle of which was an implacable hoſtility to nobility and gentry, and whoſe ſavage war-hoop was "*a l'Ariſtocrate*," by which ſenſeleſs, bloody cry, they animated one another to rapine and murder; whilſt abetted by ambitious men of another claſs, they were cruſhing every thing reſpectable and virtuous in their nation, and to their power diſgracing almoſt every name, by which we formerly knew there was ſuch a country in the world as France.

He knew too well, and he felt as much as any man, how difficult it was to accommodate a ſtanding army to a free conſtitution, or to any conſtitution. An armed, diſciplined body is, in its eſſence, dangerous to liberty; undiſciplined, it is ruinous to ſociety. Its component parts are, in the latter caſe, neither good citizens nor good ſoldiers. What have they thought of in France, under ſuch a difficulty as almoſt puts the human faculties to a ſtand? They have put their army under ſuch a variety of principles of duty, that it is more likely to breed litigants, pettifoggers, and mutineers, than ſoldiers*. They have ſet up, to balance their crown army, another army, deriving under another authority, called a municipal army—a balance of armies, not of orders. Theſe latter they have deſtroyed with every mark of inſult and oppreſſion. States may, and they will beſt, exiſt with a partition of civil powers. Armies cannot exiſt under a divided command. This ſtate of things he thought, in

* They are ſworn to obey the king, the nation, and the law.

effect,

effect, a ſtate of war, or, at beſt, but a truce inſtead of peace, in the country.

What a dreadful thing is a ſtanding army, for the conduct of the whole, or any part of which, no man is reſponſible! In the preſent ſtate of the French crown army, is the crown reſponſible for the whole of it? Is there any general who can be reſponſible for the obedience of a brigade? Any colonel for that of a regiment? Any captain for that of a company? And as to the municipal army, reinforced as it is by the new citizen-deſerters, under whoſe command are they? Have we not ſeen them, not led by, but dragging their nominal commander with a rope about his neck, when they, or thoſe whom they accompanied, proceeded to the moſt atrocious acts of treaſon and murder? Are any of theſe armies? Are any of theſe citizens?

We have in ſuch a difficulty as that of fitting a ſtanding army to the ſtate, he conceived, done much better. We have not diſtracted our army by divided principles of obedience. We have put them under a ſingle authority, with a ſimple (our common) oath of fidelity; and we keep the whole under our annual inſpection. This was doing all that could be ſafely done.

He felt ſome concern that this ſtrange thing, called a Revolution in France, ſhould be compared with the glorious event, commonly called the Revolution in England; and the conduct of the ſoldiery, on that occaſion, compared with the behaviour of ſome of the troops of France in the preſent inſtance. At that period the Prince of Orange, a prince of the blood royal in England, was called in by the flower of the Engliſh ariſtocracy to defend its antient conſtitution, and not to level all diſtinctions. To this prince, ſo invited, the ariſtocratic leaders who commanded the troops went over with their ſeveral corps, in bodies, to the deliverer of their country.

country. Ariſtocratic leaders brought up the corps of citizens who newly enliſted in this cauſe. Military obedience changed its object; but military diſcipline was not for a moment interrupted in its principle. The troops were ready for war, but indiſpoſed to mutiny.

But as the conduct of the Engliſh armies was different, ſo was that of the whole Engliſh nation at that time. In truth, the circumſtances of our revolution (as it is called) and that of France are juſt the reverſe of each other in almoſt every particular, and in the whole ſpirit of the tranſaction. With us it was the caſe of a legal monarch attempting arbitrary power—in France it is the caſe of an arbitrary monarch, beginning, from whatever cauſe, to legaliſe his authority. The one was to be reſiſted, the other was to be managed and directed; but in neither caſe was the order of the ſtate to be changed, leſt government might be ruined, which ought only to be corrected and legaliſed. With us we got rid of the man, and preſerved the conſtituent parts of the ſtate. There they get rid of the conſtituent parts of the ſtate, and keep the man. What we did was in truth and ſubſtance, and in a conſtitutional light, a revolution, not made, but prevented. We took ſolid ſecurities; we ſettled doubtful queſtions; we corrected anomalies in our law. In the ſtable fundamental parts of our conſtitution we made no revolution; no, nor any alteration at all. We did not impair the monarchy. Perhaps it might be ſhewn that we ſtrengthened it very conſiderably. The nation kept the ſame ranks, the ſame orders, the ſame privileges, the ſame franchiſes, the ſame rules for property, the ſame ſubordinations, the ſame order in the law, in the revenue, and in the magiſtracy; the ſame lords, the ſame commons, the ſame corporations, the ſame electors.

The chuch was not impaired. Her eſtates, her majeſty, her ſplendor, her orders and gradations continued the ſame.

She

She was preſerved in her full efficiency, and cleared only of a certain intolerance, which was her weakneſs and diſgrace. The church and the ſtate were the ſame after the revolution that they were before, but better ſecured in every part.

Was little done becauſe a revolution was not made in the conſtitution? No! Every thing was done; becauſe we commenced with reparation not with ruin. Accordingly the ſtate flouriſhed. Inſtead of lying as dead, in a ſort of trance, or expoſed as ſome others, in an epileptic fit, to the pity or deriſion of the world, for her wild, ridiculous, convulſive movements, impotent to every purpoſe but that of daſhing out her brains againſt the pavement, Great Britain roſe above the ſtandard, even of her former ſelf. An æra of a more improved domeſtic proſperity then commenced, and ſtill continues, not only unimpaired, but growing, under the waſting hand of time. All the energies of the country were awakened. England never preſented a firmer countenance, or a more vigorous arm, to all her enemies, and to all her rivals. Europe under her reſpired and revived. Every where ſhe appeared as the protector, aſſertor, or avenger, of liberty. A war was made and ſupported againſt fortune itſelf. The treaty of Ryſwick, which firſt limited the power of France, was ſoon after made: the grand alliance very ſhortly followed, which ſhook to the foundations the dreadful power which menaced the independence of mankind. The ſtates of Europe lay happy under the ſhade of a great and free monarchy, which knew how to be great without endangering its own peace at home, or the internal or external peace of any of its neighbours.

Mr. Burke ſaid he ſhould have felt very unpleaſantly if he had not delivered theſe ſentiments. He was near the end of his natural, probably ſtill nearer to the end of his political career; that he was weak and weary; and wiſhed for reſt.

That

That he was little diſpoſed to controverſies, or what is called a detailed oppoſition. That at his time of life, if he could not do ſomething by ſome ſort of weight of opinion, natural or acquired, it was uſeleſs and indecorous to attempt any thing by mere ſtruggle. *Turpe ſenex miles.* That he had for that reaſon little attended the army buſineſs, or that of the revenue, or almoſt any other matter of detail for ſome years paſt. That he had, however, his taſk. He was far from condemning ſuch oppoſition; on the contrary, he moſt highly applauded it, where a juſt occaſion exiſted for it, and gentlemen had vigour and capacity to purſue it. Where a great occaſion occurred, he was, and while he continued in parliament, would be amongſt the moſt active and the moſt earneſt, as he hoped he had ſhewn on a late event. With reſpect to the conſtitution itſelf, he wiſhed few alterations in it. Happy if he left it not the worſe for any ſhare he had taken in its ſervice.

Mr. Fox then roſe, and declared, in ſubſtance, that ſo far as regarded the French army, he went no farther than the general principle, by which that army ſhewed itſelf indiſpoſed to be an inſtrument in the ſervitude of their fellow citizens, but did not enter into the particulars of their conduct. He declared, that he did not affect a democracy. That he always thought any of the ſimple, unbalanced governments bad; ſimple monarchy, ſimple ariſtocracy, ſimple democracy; he held them all imperfect or vicious: all were bad by themſelves: the compoſition alone was good. That theſe had been always his principles, in which he had agreed with his friend Mr. Burke, of whom he ſaid many kind and flattering things, which Mr. Burke, I take it for granted, will know himſelf too well to think he merits, from any thing but Mr. Fox's acknowledged good-nature. Mr. Fox thought, however, that, in many caſes, Mr. Burke was rather carried too far by his hatred to innovation.

Mr. Burke ſaid, he well knew that theſe had been Mr. Fox's invariable opinions; that they were a ſure ground for the confidence of his country. But he had been fearful, that cabals of very different intentions, would be ready to make uſe of his great name, againſt his character and ſentiments, in order to derive a credit to their deſtructive machinations.

Mr. Sheridan then roſe, and made a lively and eloquent ſpeech againſt Mr. Burke; in which, among other things, he ſaid that Mr. Burke had libelled the national aſſembly of France, and had caſt out reflections on ſuch characters as thoſe of the Marquis de la Fayette and Mr. Bailly.

Mr. Burke ſaid, that he did not libel the national aſſembly of France, whom he conſidered very little in the diſcuſſion of theſe matters. That he thought all the ſubſtantial power reſided in the republic of Paris, whoſe authority guided, or whoſe example was followed by all the republics of France. The republic of Paris had an army under their orders, and not under thoſe of the national aſſembly.

N. B. As to the particular gentlemen, I do not remember that Mr. Burke mentioned either of them—certainly not Mr. Bailly. He alluded, undoubtedly, to the caſe of the Marquis de la Fayette; but whether what he aſſerted of him be a libel on him, muſt be left to thoſe who are acquainted with the buſineſs.

Mr. Pitt concluded the debate with becoming gravity and dignity, and a reſerve on both ſides of the queſtion, as related to France, fit for a perſon in a miniſterial ſituation. He ſaid, that what he had ſpoken only regarded France when ſhe ſhould unite, which he rather thought ſhe ſoon might, with the liberty ſhe had acquired, the bleſſings of law and order. He, too, ſaid ſeveral civil things concerning the ſentiments of Mr. Burke, as applied to this country.

MR.

MR. BURKE'S

REFLECTIONS

ON THE

REVOLUTION IN FRANCE,

AND ON THE

PROCEEDINGS IN CERTAIN SOCIETIES IN LONDON

RELATIVE TO THAT EVENT.

IN A

LETTER

INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN SENT TO A GENTLEMAN

IN PARIS.

1790.

IT may not be unnecessary to inform the Reader, that the following Reflections had their origin in a correspondence between the Author and a very young gentleman at Paris, who did him the honour of defiring his opinion upon the important transactions which have then, and ever fince, have fo much occupied the attention of all men. An anfwer was written fome time in the month of October 1789; but it was kept back upon prudential confiderations. That letter is alfo here forwarded to the perfon to whom it was addreffed. The reafons for the delay are therein alleged in a fhort letter to the fame gentleman. This produced on his part a new requeft, that the Author would publifh his fentiments.

The Author began a fecond letter, but the multiplication of fubjects that prefented themfelves, he found that what he had undertaken not only far exceeded the meafure of a letter, but that its importance required rather a more detailed confideration than at that time he had any leifure to beftow upon it. However, having thrown down his firft thoughts in the form of a letter, and indeed when he fat down to write, intending to have been fent to a gentleman in Paris, found it difficult to change the form of addrefs, when his fentiments had grown into a greater extent, and had received another direction. A different title, he is fenfible, might be more favourable to a commodious diviſion and diſtribution of his matter.

IT may not be unneceſſary to inform the Reader, that the following Reflections had their origin in a correſpondence between the Author and a very young gentleman at Paris, who did him the honour of deſiring his opinion upon the important tranſactions, which then, and ever ſince, have ſo much occupied the attention of all men. An anſwer was written ſome time in the month of October 1789; but it was kept back upon prudential conſiderations. That letter is alluded to in the beginning of the following ſheets. It has been ſince forwarded to the perſon to whom it was addreſſed. The reaſons for the delay in ſending it were aſſigned in a ſhort letter to the ſame gentleman. This produced on his part a new and preſſing application for the Author's ſentiments.

The Author began a ſecond and more full diſcuſſion on the ſubject. This he had ſome thoughts of publiſhing early in the laſt ſpring; but the matter gaining upon him, he found that what he had undertaken not only far exceeded the meaſure of a letter, but that its importance required rather a more detailed conſideration than at that time he had any leiſure to beſtow upon it. However, having thrown down his firſt thoughts in the form of a letter, and indeed when he ſat down to write, having intended it for a private letter, he found it difficult to change the form of addreſs, when his ſentiments had grown into a greater extent, and had received another direction. A different plan, he is ſenſible, might be more favourable to a commodious diviſion and diſtribution of his matter.

REFLECTIONS, &c.

IT may not be unnecessary to inform the reader, that the following Letter passed between the Author and a very young gentleman at Paris, who did him the honour of desiring his opinion upon the important transactions, which then, and ever since, have so much occupied the attention of all men. An answer written some time in the month of [illegible] 1789, was returned to the person to whom it was addressed. It was not, however, intended for the public eye, but was merely a private communication to a friend. The Author has been induced to publish it, from a conviction that many of the observations contained in it are applicable to the present state of affairs in France, and from a wish that the sentiments of a plain man, who has no connection with any party, may have their influence upon the minds of his countrymen.

DEAR SIR,

YOU are pleased to call again, and with some earnestness, to ask me my thoughts on the late proceedings in France. I shall not give you reason to imagine, that I think my sentiments of much value in themselves, or that they are of too little consequence to be very anxiously either communicated or withheld. It was from attention to you, and to you only, that I hesitated at the time when you first desired to receive them. In the first letter I have now the honour to write to you, and which at length I send, I will be neither tedious nor uninteresting. My errors, if any, are my own. My reputation alone is to answer for them.

You see, Sir, by the long letter I have transmitted to you, that, though I do not be[illegible]ly with that France may be animated by a spirit of rational liberty, and that I think you bound, in all honest policy, to provide a permanent body, in which that spirit may reside, and an effectual organ, by which it may act, it is my misfortune to entertain great doubts concerning several material points in your late proceedings.

You imagined, when you wrote last, that I might possibly be reckoned among the approvers of certain proceedings in France, from the solemn public zeal of [illegible]ction they have received from two clubs of gentlemen in London, called the Constitutional Society, and the Revolution Society.

REFLECTIONS, &c.

DEAR SIR,

YOU are pleaſed to call again, and with ſome earneſtneſs, for my thoughts on the late proceedings in France. I will not give you reaſon to imagine, that I think my ſentiments of ſuch value as to wiſh myſelf to be ſolicited about them. They are of too little conſequence to be very anxiouſly either communicated or withheld. It was from attention to you, and to you only, that I heſitated at the time, when you firſt deſired to receive them. In the firſt letter I had the honour to write to you, and which at length I ſend, I wrote neither for nor from any deſcription of men; nor ſhall I in this. My errors, if any, are my own. My reputation alone is to anſwer for them.

You ſee, Sir, by the long letter I have tranſmitted to you, that, though I do moſt heartily wiſh that France may be animated by a ſpirit of rational liberty, and that I think you bound, in all honeſt policy, to provide a permanent body, in which that ſpirit may reſide, and an effectual organ, by which it may act, it is my misfortune to entertain great doubts concerning ſeveral material points in your late tranſactions.

You imagined, when you wrote laſt, that I might poſſibly be reckoned among the approvers of certain proceedings in France, from the ſolemn public ſeal of ſanction they have received from two clubs of gentlemen in London, called the Conſtitutional Society, and the Revolution Society.

 I certainly

I certainly have the honour to belong to more clubs than one, in which the conſtitution of this kingdom, and the principles of the glorious revolution, are held in high reverence: and I reckon myſelf among the moſt forward in my zeal for maintaining that conſtitution and thoſe principles in their utmoſt purity and vigour. It is becauſe I do ſo, that I think it neceſſary for me, that there ſhould be no miſtake. Thoſe who cultivate the memory of our revolution, and thoſe who are attached to the conſtitution of this kingdom, will take good care how they are involved with perſons who, under the pretext of zeal towards the revolution and conſtitution, too frequently wander from their true principles; and are ready on every occaſion to depart from the firm but cautious and deliberate ſpirit which produced the one, and which preſides in the other. Before I proceed to anſwer the more material particulars in your letter, I ſhall beg leave to give you ſuch information as I have been able to obtain of the two clubs which have thought proper, as bodies, to interfere in the concerns of France; firſt aſſuring you, that I am not, and that I have never been, a member of either of thoſe ſocieties.

The firſt, calling itſelf the Conſtitutional Society, or Society for Conſtitutional Information, or by ſome ſuch title, is, I believe, of ſeven or eight years ſtanding. The inſtitution of this ſociety appears to be of a charitable, and ſo far of a laudable, nature: it was intended for the circulation, at the expence of the members, of many books, which few others would be at the expence of buying; and which might lie on the hands of the bookſellers, to the great loſs of an uſeful body of men. Whether the books ſo charitably circulated, were ever as charitably read, is more than I know. Poſſibly ſeveral of them have been exported to France; and, like goods not in requeſt here, may with you have found a market.

market. I have heard much talk of the lights to be drawn from books that are ſent from hence. What improvements they have had in their paſſage (as it is ſaid ſome liquors are meliorated by croſſing the ſea) I cannot tell: but I never heard a man of common judgment, or the leaſt degree of information, ſpeak a word in praiſe of the greater part of the publications circulated by that ſociety; nor have their proceedings been accounted, except by ſome of themſelves, as of any ſerious conſequence.

Your national aſſembly ſeems to entertain much the ſame opinion that I do of this poor charitable club. As a nation, you reſerved the whole ſtock of your eloquent acknowledgments for the Revolution Society; when their fellows in the Conſtitutional were, in equity, entitled to ſome ſhare. Since you have ſelected the Revolution Society as the great object of your national thanks and praiſes, you will think me excuſeable in making its late conduct the ſubject of my obſervations. The national aſſembly of France has given importance to theſe gentlemen by adopting them; and they return the favour, by acting as a committee in England for extending the principles of the national aſſembly. Henceforward we muſt conſider them as a kind of privileged perſons; as no inconſiderable members in the diplomatic body. This is one among the revolutions which have given ſplendor to obſcurity, and diſtinction to undiſcerned merit. Until very lately I do not recollect to have heard of this club. I am quite ſure that it never occupied a moment of my thoughts; nor, I believe, thoſe of any perſon out of their own ſet. I find, upon enquiry, that on the anniverſary of the revolution in 1688, a club of diſſenters, but of what denomination I know not, have long had the cuſtom of hearing a ſermon in one of their churches; and that afterwards they ſpent the day cheerfully, as other clubs do, at the tavern. But I never

heard that any public meaſure, or political ſyſtem, much leſs that the merits of the conſtitution of any foreign nation, had been the ſubject of a formal proceeding at their feſtivals; until, to my inexpreſſible ſurprize, I found them in a ſort of public capacity, by a congratulatory addreſs, giving an authoritative ſanction to the proceedings of the national aſſembly in France.

In the antient principles and conduct of the club, ſo far at leaſt as they were declared, I ſee nothing to which I could take exception. I think it very probable, that for ſome purpoſe, new members may have entered among them; and that ſome truly chriſtian politicians, who love to diſpenſe benefits, but are careful to conceal the hand which diſtributes the dole, may have made them the inſtruments of their pious deſigns. Whatever I may have reaſon to ſuſpect concerning private management, I ſhall ſpeak of nothing as of a certainty but what is public.

For one, I ſhould be ſorry to be thought, directly or indirectly, concerned in their proceedings. I certainly take my full ſhare, along with the reſt of the world, in my individual and private capacity, in ſpeculating on what has been done, or is doing, on the public ſtage; in any place antient or modern; in the republic of Rome, or the republic of Paris: but having no general apoſtolical miſſion, being a citizen of a particular ſtate, and being bound up in a conſiderable degree, by its public will, I ſhould think it at leaſt improper and irregular for me to open a formal public correſpondence with the actual government of a foreign nation, without the expreſs authority of the government under which I live.

I ſhould be ſtill more unwilling to enter into that correſpondence, under any thing like an equivocal deſcription, which to many, unacquainted with our uſages, might make the

the addreſs, in which I joined, appear as the act of perſons in ſome ſort of corporate capacity, acknowledged by the laws of this kingdom, and authorized to ſpeak the ſenſe of ſome part of it. On account of the ambiguity and uncertainty of unauthorized general deſcriptions, and of the deceit which may be practiſed under them, and not from mere formality, the houſe of commons would reject the moſt ſneaking petition for the moſt trifling object, under that mode of ſignature to which you have thrown open the folding-doors of your preſence chamber, and have uſhered into your national aſſembly, with as much ceremony and parade, and with as great a buſtle of applauſe, as if you had been viſited by the whole repreſentative majeſty of the whole Engliſh nation. If what this ſociety has thought proper to ſend forth had been a piece of argument, it would have ſignified little whoſe argument it was. It would be neither the more nor the leſs convincing on account of the party it came from. But this is only a vote and reſolution. It ſtands ſolely on authority; and in this caſe it is the mere authority of individuals, few of whom appear. Their ſignatures ought, in my opinion, to have been annexed to their inſtrument. The world would then have the means of knowing how many they are; who they are; and of what value their opinions may be, from their perſonal abilities, from their knowledge, their experience, or their lead and authority in this ſtate. To me, who am but a plain man, the proceeding looks a little too refined, and too ingenious; it has too much the air of a political ſtratagem, adopted for the ſake of giving, under an high-ſounding name, an importance to the public declarations of this club, which, when the matter came to be cloſely inſpected, they did not altogether ſo well deſerve. It is a policy that has very much the complexion of a fraud.

I flatter myſelf that I love a manly, moral, regulated liberty as well as any gentleman of that ſociety, be he who he will; and perhaps I have given as good proofs of my attachment to that cauſe, in the whole courſe of my public conduct. I think I envy liberty as little as they do, to any other nation. But I cannot ſtand forward, and give praiſe or blame to any thing which relates to human actions, and human concerns, on a ſimple view of the object, as it ſtands ſtripped of every relation, in all the nakedneſs and ſolitude of metaphyſical abſtraction. Circumſtances (which with ſome gentlemen paſs for nothing) give in reality to every political principle its diſtinguiſhing colour, and diſcriminating effect. The circumſtances are what render every civil and political ſcheme beneficial or noxious to mankind. Abſtractedly ſpeaking, government, as well as liberty, is good; yet could I, in common ſenſe, ten years ago, have felicitated France on her enjoyment of a government (for ſhe then had a government) without enquiry what the nature of that government was, or how it was adminiſtered? Can I now congratulate the ſame nation upon its freedom? Is it becauſe liberty in the abſtract may be claſſed amongſt the bleſſings of mankind, that I am ſeriouſly to felicitate a madman, who has eſcaped from the protecting reſtraint and wholeſome darkneſs of his cell, on his reſtoration to the enjoyment of light and liberty? Am I to congratulate an highwayman and murderer, who has broke priſon, upon the recovery of his natural rights? This would be to act over again the ſcene of the criminals condemned to the gallies, and their heroic deliverer, the metaphyſic knight of the ſorrowful countenance.

When I ſee the ſpirit of liberty in action, I ſee a ſtrong principle at work; and this, for a while, is all I can poſſibly know of it. The wild *gas*, the fixed air is plainly broke looſe: but we ought

ought to ſuſpend our judgment until the firſt effervescence is a little ſubſided, till the liquor is cleared, and until we ſee ſomething deeper than the agitation of a troubled and frothy ſurface. I muſt be tolerably ſure, before I venture publicly to congratulate men upon a bleſſing, that they have really received one. Flattery corrupts both the receiver and the giver; and adulation is not of more ſervice to the people than to kings. I ſhould therefore ſuſpend my congratulations on the new liberty of France, until I was informed how it had been combined with government; with public force; with the diſcipline and obedience of armies; with the collection of an effective and well-diſtributed revenue; with morality and religion; with the ſolidity of property; with peace and order; with civil and ſocial manners. All theſe (in their way) are good things too; and, without them, liberty is not a benefit whilſt it laſts, and is not likely to continue long. The effect of liberty to individuals is, that they may do what they pleaſe: we ought to ſee what it will pleaſe them to do, before we riſque congratulations, which may be ſoon turned into complaints. Prudence would dictate this in the caſe of ſeparate inſulated private men; but liberty, when men act in bodies, is *power*. Conſiderate people, before they declare themſelves, will obſerve the uſe which is made of *power*; and particularly of ſo trying a thing as *new* power in *new* perſons, of whoſe principles, tempers, and diſpoſitions, they have little or no experience, and in ſituations where thoſe who appear the moſt ſtirring in the ſcene may poſſibly not be the real movers.

All theſe conſiderations however were below the tranſcendental dignity of the revolution ſociety. Whilſt I continued in the country, from whence I had the honour of writing to you, I had but an imperfect idea of their tranſactions. On my coming to town, I ſent for an account of their proceedings,

ings, which had been publiſhed by their authority, containing a ſermon of Dr. Price, with the Duke de Rochefaucault's and the Archbiſhop of Aix's letter, and ſeveral other documents annexed. The whole of that publication, with the manifeſt deſign of connecting the affairs of France with thoſe of England, by drawing us into an imitation of the conduct of the national aſſembly, gave me a conſiderable degree of uneaſineſs. The effect of that conduct upon the power, credit, proſperity, and tranquillity of France, became every day more evident. The form of conſtitution to be ſettled, for its future polity, became more clear. We are now in a condition to diſcern, with tolerable exactneſs, the true nature of the object held up to our imitation. If the prudence of reſerve and decorum dictates ſilence in ſome circumſtances, in others prudence of an higher order may juſtify us in ſpeaking our thoughts. The beginnings of confuſion with us in England are at preſent feeble enough; but with you, we have ſeen an infancy ſtill more feeble, growing by moments into a ſtrength to heap mountains upon mountains, and to wage war with heaven itſelf. Whenever our neighbour's houſe is on fire, it cannot be amiſs for the engines to play a little on our own. Better to be deſpiſed for too anxious apprehenſions, than ruined by too confident a ſecurity.

Solicitous chiefly for the peace of my own country, but by no means unconcerned for your's, I wiſh to communicate more largely, what was at firſt intended only for your private ſatisfaction. I ſhall ſtill keep your affairs in my eye, and continue to addreſs myſelf to you. Indulging myſelf in the freedom of epiſtolary intercourſe, I beg leave to throw out my thoughts, and expreſs my feelings, juſt as they ariſe in my mind, with very little attention to formal method. I ſet out with the proceedings of the revolution ſociety; but

I ſhall

I ſhall not confine myſelf to them. Is it poſſible I ſhould? It looks to me as if I were in a great criſis, not of the affairs of France alone, but of all Europe, perhaps of more than Europe. All circumſtances taken together, the French revolution is the moſt aſtoniſhing that has hitherto happened in the world. The moſt wonderful things are brought about in many inſtances by means the moſt abſurd and ridiculous; in the moſt ridiculous modes; and apparently, by the moſt contemptible inſtruments. Every thing ſeems out of nature in this ſtrange chaos of levity and ferocity, and of all ſorts of crimes jumbled together with all ſorts of follies. In viewing this monſtrous tragi-comic ſcene, the moſt oppoſite paſſions neceſſarily ſucceed, and ſometimes mix with each other in the mind; alternate contempt and indignation; alternate laughter and tears; alternate ſcorn and horror.

It cannot however be denied, that to ſome this ſtrange ſcene appeared in quite another point of view. Into them it inſpired no other ſentiments than thoſe of exultation and rapture. They ſaw nothing in what has been done in France, but a firm and temperate exertion of freedom; ſo conſiſtent, on the whole, with morals and with piety, as to make it deſerving not only of the ſecular applauſe of daſhing Machiavelian politicians, but to render it a fit theme for all the devout effuſions of ſacred eloquence.

On the forenoon of the 4th of November laſt, Doctor Richard Price, a non-conforming miniſter of eminence, preached at the diſſenting meeting-houſe of the Old Jewry, to his club or ſociety, a very extraordinary miſcellaneous ſermon, in which there are ſome good moral and religious ſentiments, and not ill expreſſed, mixed up in a ſort of porridge of various political opinions and reflections: but the revolution in France is the grand ingredient in the cauldron. I conſider the addreſs tranſmitted by the revolution

ſociety to the national aſſembly, through Earl Stanhope, as originating in the principles of the ſermon, and as a corollary from them. It was moved by the preacher of that diſcourſe. It was paſſed by thoſe who came reeking from the effect of the ſermon, without any cenſure or qualification, expreſſed or implied. If, however, any of the gentlemen concerned ſhall wiſh to ſeparate the ſermon from the reſolution, they know how to acknowledge the one, and to diſavow the other. They may do it: I cannot.

For my part, I looked on that ſermon as the public declaration of a man much connected with literary caballers, and intriguing philoſophers; with political theologians, and theological politicians, both at home and abroad. I know they ſet him up as a ſort of oracle; becauſe, with the beſt intentions in the world, he naturally *philippizes*, and chaunts his prophetic ſong in exact uniſon with their deſigns.

That ſermon is in a ſtrain which I believe has not been heard in this kingdom, in any of the pulpits which are tolerated or encouraged in it, ſince the year 1648, when a predeceſſor of Dr. Price, the Reverend Hugh Peters, made the vault of the king's own chapel at St. James's ring with the honour and privilege of the ſaints, who, with the "high "praiſes of God in their mouths, and a *two*-edged ſword in "their hands, were to execute judgment on the heathen, "and puniſhments upon the *people*; to bind their *kings* with "chains, and their *nobles* with fetters of iron *." Few harangues from the pulpit, except in the days of your league in France, or in the days of our ſolemn league and covenant in England, have ever breathed leſs of the ſpirit of moderation than this lecture in the Old Jewry. Suppoſing, however, that ſomething like moderation were viſible in this political ſermon; yet politics and the pulpit are terms that

* Pſalm cxlix.

have

have little agreement. No ſound ought to be heard in the church but the healing voice of chriſtian charity. The cauſe of civil liberty and civil government gains as little as that of religion by this confuſion of duties. Thoſe who quit their proper character, to aſſume what does not belong to them, are, for the greater part, ignorant both of the character they leave, and of the character they aſſume. Wholly unacquainted with the world in which they are ſo fond of meddling, and inexperienced in all its affairs, on which they pronounce with ſo much confidence, they have nothing of politics but the paſſions they excite. Surely the church is a place where one day's truce ought to be allowed to the diſſenſions and animoſities of mankind.

This pulpit ſtyle, revived after ſo long a diſcontinuance, had to me the air of novelty, and of a novelty not wholly without danger. I do not charge this danger equally to every part of the diſcourſe. The hint given to a noble and reverend lay-divine, who is ſuppoſed high in office in one of our univerſities *, and to other lay-divines "of *rank* and literature," may be proper and ſeaſonable, though ſomewhat new. If the noble *Seekers* ſhould find nothing to ſatisfy their pious fancies in the old ſtaple of the national church, or in all the rich variety to be found in the well-aſſorted warehouſes of the diſſenting congregations, Dr. Price adviſes them to improve upon non-conformity; and to ſet up, each of them, a ſeparate meeting-houſe upon his own particular principles †. It is ſomewhat remarkable that this reverend

* Diſcourſe on the Love of our Country, Nov. 4, 1789, by Dr. Richard Price, 3d edition, p. 17 and 18.

† "Thoſe who diſlike that mode of worſhip which is preſcribed by public authority "ought, if they can find *no* worſhip *out* of the church which they approve, *to ſet up a ſeparate* "*worſhip for themſelves*; and by doing this, and giving an example of a rational and manly "worſhip, men of *weight* from their *rank* and literature may do the greateſt ſervice to ſo-"ciety and the world." P. 18. Dr. Price's Sermon.

divine ſhould be ſo earneſt for ſetting up new churches, and ſo perfectly indifferent concerning the doctrine which may be taught in them. His zeal is of a curious character. It is not for the propagation of his own opinions, but of any opinions. It is not for the diffuſion of truth, but for the ſpreading of contradiction. Let the noble teachers but diſſent, it is no matter from whom or from what. This great point once ſecured, it is taken for granted their religion will be rational and manly. I doubt whether religion would reap all the benefits which the calculating divine computes from this "great company of great preachers." It would certainly be a valuable addition of non-deſcripts to the ample collection of known claſſes, genera and ſpecies, which at preſent beautify the *hortus ſiccus* of diſſent. A ſermon from a noble duke, or a noble marquis, or a noble earl, or baron bold, would certainly increaſe and diverſify the amuſements of this town, which begins to grow ſatiated with the uniform round of its vapid diſſipations. I ſhould only ſtipulate that theſe new *Meſs-Johns* in robes and coronets ſhould keep ſome ſort of bounds in the democratic and levelling principles which are expected from their titled pulpits. The new evangeliſts will, I dare ſay, diſappoint the hopes that are conceived of them. They will not become, literally as well as figuratively, polemic divines, nor be diſpoſed ſo to drill their congregations that they may, as in former bleſſed times, preach their doctrines to regiments of dragoons, and corps of infantry and artillery. Such arrangements, however favourable to the cauſe of compulſory freedom, civil and religious, may not be equally conducive to the national tranquillity. Theſe few reſtrictions I hope are no great ſtretches of intolerance, no very violent exertions of deſpotiſm.

But I may ſay of our preacher, "*utinam nugis tota illa dediſſet* "*tempora ſævitiæ.*"—All things in this his fulminating bull

are

are not of ſo innoxious a tendency. His doctrines affect our conſtitution in its vital parts. He tells the revolution ſociety, in this political ſermon, that his majeſty "is almoſt "the *only* lawful king in the world, becauſe the *only* one "who owes his crown to the *choice of his people*." As to the kings of *the world*, all of whom (except one) this archpontiff of the *rights of men*, with all the plenitude, and with more than the boldneſs of the papal depoſing power in its meridian fervour of the twelfth century, puts into one ſweeping clauſe of ban and anathema, and proclaims uſurpers by circles of longitude and latitude, over the whole globe, it behoves them to conſider how they admit into their territories theſe apoſtolic miſſionaries, who are to tell their ſubjects they are not lawful kings. That is their concern. It is ours, as a domeſtic intereſt of ſome moment, ſeriouſly to conſider the ſolidity of the *only* principle upon which theſe gentlemen acknowledge a king of Great Britain to be entitled to their allegiance.

This doctrine, as applied to the prince now on the Britiſh throne, either is nonſenſe, and therefore neither true nor falſe, or it affirms a moſt unfounded, dangerous, illegal, and unconſtitutional poſition. According to this ſpiritual doctor of politics, if his majeſty does not owe his crown to the choice of his people, he is no *lawful* king. Now nothing can be more untrue than that the crown of this kingdom is ſo held by his majeſty. Therefore if you follow their rule, the king of Great Britain, who moſt certainly does not owe his high office to any form of popular election, is in no reſpect better than the reſt of the gang of uſurpers, who reign, or rather rob, all over the face of this our miſerable world, without any ſort of right or title to the allegiance of their people. The policy of this general doctrine, ſo qualified, is evident enough. The propagators of this political goſpel are

in hopes their abſtract principle (their principle that a popular choice is neceſſary to the legal exiſtence of the ſovereign magiſtracy) would be overlooked whilſt the king of Great Britain was not affected by it. In the mean time the ears of their congregations would be gradually habituated to it, as if it were a firſt principle admitted without diſpute. For the preſent it would only operate as a theory, pickled in the preſerving juices of pulpit eloquence, and laid by for future uſe. *Condo et compono quæ mox depromere poſſim.* By this policy, whilſt our government is ſoothed with a reſervation in its favour, to which it has no claim, the ſecurity, which it has in common with all governments, ſo far as opinion is ſecurity, is taken away.

Thus theſe politicians proceed, whilſt little notice is taken of their doctrines; but when they come to be examined upon the plain meaning of their words and the direct tendency of their doctrines, then equivocations and ſlippery conſtructions come into play. When they ſay the king owes his crown to the choice of his people, and is therefore the only lawful ſovereign in the world, they will perhaps tell us they mean to ſay no more than that ſome of the king's predeceſſors have been called to the throne by ſome ſort of choice; and therefore he owes his crown to the choice of his people. Thus, by a miſerable ſubterfuge, they hope to render their propoſition ſafe, by rendering it nugatory. They are welcome to the aſylum they ſeek for their offence, ſince they take refuge in their folly. For, if you admit this interpretation, how does their idea of election differ from our idea of inheritance? And how does the ſettlement of the crown in the Brunſwick line derived from James the firſt, come to legalize our monarchy, rather than that of any of the neighbouring countries? At ſome time or other, to be ſure, all the beginners of dynaſties were choſen by thoſe who

who called them to govern. There is ground enough for the opinion that all the kingdoms of Europe were at a remote period, elective, with more or fewer limitations in the objects of choice; but whatever kings might have been here or elſewhere, a thouſand years ago, or in whatever manner the ruling dynaſties of England or France may have begun, the King of Great Britain is at this day king by a fixed rule of ſucceſſion, according to the laws of his country; and whilſt the legal conditions of the compact of ſovereignty are performed by him (as they are performed) he holds his crown in contempt of the choice of the revolution ſociety, who have not a ſingle vote for a king amongſt them, either individually or collectively; though I make no doubt they would ſoon erect themſelves into an electoral college, if things were ripe to give effect to their claim. His majeſty's heirs and ſucceſſors, each in his time and order, will come to the crown with the ſame contempt of their choice with which his majeſty has ſucceeded to that he wears.

Whatever may be the ſucceſs of evaſion in explaining away the groſs error of *fact*, which ſuppoſes that his majeſty (though he holds it in concurrence with the wiſhes) owes his crown to the choice of his people, yet nothing can evade their full explicit declaration, concerning the principle of a right in the people to chooſe, which right is directly maintained, and tenaciouſly adhered to. All the oblique inſinuations concerning election bottom in this propoſition, and are referable to it. Leſt the foundation of the king's excluſive legal title ſhould paſs for a mere rant of adulatory freedom, the political divine proceeds dogmatically to aſſert*, that by the principles of the revolution the people of England have acquired three fundamental rights, all which, with

* P. 34, Diſcourſe on the Love of our Country, by Dr. Price.

him,

him, compoſe one ſyſtem, and lie together in one ſhort ſentence; namely, that we have acquired a right

1. "To chooſe our own governors."
2. "To caſhier them for miſconduct."
3. "To frame a government for ourſelves."

This new, and hitherto unheard-of bill of rights, though made in the name of the whole people, belongs to thoſe gentlemen and their faction only. The body of the people of England have no ſhare in it. They utterly diſclaim it. They will reſiſt the practical aſſertion of it with their lives and fortunes. They are bound to do ſo by the laws of their country, made at the time of that very revolution, which is appealed to in favour of the fictitious rights claimed by the ſociety which abuſes its name.

Theſe gentlemen of the Old Jewry, in all their reaſonings on the revolution of 1688, have a revolution which happened in England about forty years before, and the late French revolution, ſo much before their eyes, and in their hearts, that they are conſtantly confounding all the three together. It is neceſſary that we ſhould ſeparate what they confound. We muſt recall their erring fancies to the *acts* of the revolution which we revere, for the diſcovery of its true *principles*. If the *principles* of the revolution of 1688 are any where to be found, it is in the ſtatute called the *Declaration of Right*. In that moſt wiſe, ſober, and conſiderate declaration, drawn up by great lawyers and great ſtateſmen, and not by warm and inexperienced enthuſiaſts, not one word is ſaid, nor one ſuggeſtion made, of a general right "to chooſe our own "*governors*; to caſhier them for miſconduct; and to *form* "a government for *ourſelves*."

This declaration of right (the act of the 1ſt of William and Mary, ſeſſ. 2. ch. 2.) is the corner-ſtone of our conſtitution, as reinforced, explained, improved, and in its fundamental

mental principles for ever ſettled. It is called "An act for "declaring the rights and liberties of the ſubject, and for "*ſettling* the *ſucceſſion* of the crown." You will obſerve, that theſe rights and this ſucceſſion are declared in one body, and bound indiſſolubly together.

A few years after this period, a ſecond opportunity offered for aſſerting a right of election to the crown. On the proſpect of a total failure of iſſue from King William, and from the Princeſs, afterwards Queen Anne, the conſideration of the ſettlement of the crown, and of a further ſecurity for the liberties of the people, again came before the legiſlature. Did they this ſecond time make any proviſion for legalizing the crown on the ſpurious revolution principles of the Old Jewry? No. They followed the principles which prevailed in the declaration of right; indicating with more preciſion the perſons who were to inherit in the proteſtant line. This act alſo incorporated, by the ſame policy, our liberties, and an hereditary ſucceſſion in the ſame act. Inſtead of a right to chooſe our own governors, they declared that the *ſucceſſion* in that line (the proteſtant line drawn from James the firſt) was abſolutely neceſſary "for the peace, quiet, and "ſecurity of the realm," and that it was equally urgent on them "to maintain a *certainty in the ſucceſſion* thereof, to "which the ſubjects may ſafely have recourſe for their pro-"tection." Both theſe acts, in which are heard the unerring, unambiguous oracles of revolution policy, inſtead of countenancing the deluſive, gipſey predictions of a "right "to chooſe our governors," prove to a demonſtration how totally adverſe the wiſdom of the nation was from turning a caſe of neceſſity into a rule of law.

Unqueſtionably there was at the revolution, in the perſon of King William, a ſmall and a temporary deviation from the ſtrict order of a regular hereditary ſucceſſion; but it is

againſt

againſt all genuine principles of juriſprudence to draw a principle from a law made in a ſpecial caſe, and regarding an individual perſon. *Privilegium non tranſit in exemplum.* If ever there was a time favourable for eſtabliſhing the principle, that a king of popular choice was the only legal king, without all doubt it was at the revolution. Its not being done at that time is a proof that the nation was of opinion it ought not to be done at any time. There is no perſon ſo completely ignorant of our hiſtory, as not to know, that the majority in parliament of both parties were ſo little diſpoſed to any thing reſembling that principle, that at firſt they were determined to place the vacant crown, not on the head of the Prince of Orange, but on that of his wife Mary, daughter of King James, the eldeſt born of the iſſue of that king, which they acknowledged as undoubtedly his. It would be to repeat a very trite ſtory, to recall to your memory all thoſe circumſtances which demonſtrated that their accepting King William was not properly a *choice*; but to all thoſe who did not wiſh, in effect to recall King James, or to deluge their country in blood, and again to bring their religion, laws, and liberties into the peril they had juſt eſcaped, it was an act of *neceſſity*, in the ſtricteſt moral ſenſe in which neceſſity can be taken.

In the very act, in which for a time, and in a ſingle caſe, parliament departed from the ſtrict order of inheritance, in favour of a prince, who, though not next, was however very near in the line of ſucceſſion, it is curious to obſerve how Lord Somers, who drew the bill called the Declaration of Right, has comported himſelf on that delicate occaſion. It is curious to obſerve with what addreſs this temporary ſolution of continuity is kept from the eye; whilſt all that could be found in this act of neceſſity to countenance the idea of an hereditary ſucceſſion is brought forward, and

foſtered,

foſtered, and made the moſt of, by this great man, and by the legiſlature who followed him. Quitting the dry, imperative ſtyle of an act of parliament, he makes the lords and commons fall to a pious, legiſlative ejaculation, and declare, that they conſider it "as a marvellous providence, and mer-"ciful goodneſs of God to this nation, to preſerve their ſaid "majeſties *royal* perſons, moſt happily to reign over us *on* "*the throne of their anceſtors*, for which, from the bottom "of their hearts, they return their humbleſt thanks and "praiſes."—The legiſlature plainly had in view the act of recognition of the firſt of Queen Elizabeth, chap. 3d, and of that of James the Firſt, chap. 1ſt, both acts ſtrongly declaratory of the inheritable nature of the crown, and in many parts they follow, with a nearly literal preciſion, the words and even the form of thankſgiving, which is found in theſe old declaratory ſtatutes.

The two houſes, in the act of King William, did not thank God that they had found a fair opportunity to aſſert a right to chooſe their own governors, much leſs to make an election the *only lawful* title to the crown. Their having been in a condition to avoid the very appearance of it, as much as poſſible, was by them conſidered as a providential eſcape. They threw a politic, well-wrought veil over every circumſtance tending to weaken the rights, which in the meliorated order of ſucceſſion they meant to perpetuate; or which might furniſh a precedent for any future departure from what they had then ſettled for ever. Accordingly, that they might not relax the nerves of their monarchy, and that they might preſerve a cloſe conformity to the practice of their anceſtors, as it appeared in the declaratory ſtatutes of Queen Mary * and Queen Elizabeth, in the next clauſe they

* 1ſt Mary, ſeſſ. 3. ch. 1.

veſt, by recognition, in their majeſties, *all* the legal prerogatives of the crown, declaring, "that in them they are "moſt *fully*, rightfully, and *intirely* inveſted, incorporated, "united, and annexed." In the clauſe which follows, for preventing queſtions, by reaſon of any pretended titles to the crown, they declare (obſerving alſo in this the traditionary language, along with the traditionary policy of the nation, and repeating as from a rubric the language of the preceding acts of Elizabeth and James) that on the preſerving "a "*certainty* in the SUCCESSION thereof, the unity, peace, "and tranquillity of this nation doth, under God, wholly "depend."

They knew that a doubtful title of ſucceſſion would but too much reſemble an election; and that an election would be utterly deſtructive of the "unity, peace, and tranquillity "of this nation," which they thought to be conſiderations of ſome moment. To provide for theſe objects, and therefore to exclude for ever the Old Jewry doctrine of "a right "to chooſe our own governors," they follow with a clauſe, containing a moſt ſolemn pledge, taken from the preceding act of Queen Elizabeth, as ſolemn a pledge as ever was or can be given in favour of an hereditary ſucceſſion, and as ſolemn a renunciation as could be made of the principles by this ſociety imputed to them. "The lords ſpiritual and "temporal, and commons, do, in the name of all the people "aforeſaid, moſt humbly and faithfully ſubmit *themſelves*, "*their heirs and poſterities for ever*; and do faithfully pro-"miſe, that they will ſtand to, maintain, and defend their "ſaid majeſties, and alſo the *limitation of the crown*, herein "ſpecified and contained, to the utmoſt of their powers," &c. &c.

So far is it from being true, that we acquired a right by the revolution to elect our kings, that if we had poſſeſſed it

before, the Engliſh nation did at that time moſt ſolemnly renounce and abdicate it, for themſelves, and for all their poſterity for ever. Theſe gentlemen may value themſelves as much as they pleaſe on their whig principles; but I never deſire to be thought a better whig than Lord Somers; or to underſtand the principles of the revolution better than thoſe by whom it was brought about; or to read in the declaration of right any myſteries unknown to thoſe whoſe penetrating ſtyle has engraved in our ordinances, and in our hearts, the words and ſpirit of that immortal law.

It is true that, aided with the powers derived from force and opportunity, the nation was at that time, in ſome ſenſe, free to take what courſe it pleaſed for filling the throne; but only free to do ſo upon the ſame grounds on which they might have wholly aboliſhed their monarchy, and every other part of their conſtitution. However they did not think ſuch bold changes within their commiſſion. It is indeed difficult, perhaps impoſſible, to give limits to the mere *abſtract* competence of the ſupreme power, ſuch as was exerciſed by parliament at that time; but the limits of a *moral* competence, ſubjecting, even in powers more indiſputably ſovereign, occaſional will to permanent reaſon, and to the ſteady maxims of faith, juſtice, and fixed fundamental policy, are perfectly intelligible, and perfectly binding upon thoſe who exerciſe any authority, under any name, or under any title, in the ſtate. The houſe of lords, for inſtance, is not morally competent to diſſolve the houſe of commons; no, nor even to diſſolve itſelf, nor to abdicate, if it would, its portion in the legiſlature of the kingdom. Though a king may abdicate for his own perſon, he cannot abdicate for the monarchy. By as ſtrong, or by a ſtronger reaſon, the houſe of commons cannot renounce its ſhare of authority. The engagement and pact of ſociety, which generally goes by

the name of the conſtitution, forbids ſuch invaſion and ſuch ſurrender. The conſtituent parts of a ſtate are obliged to hold their public faith with each other, and with all thoſe who derive any ſerious intereſt under their engagements, as much as the whole ſtate is bound to keep its faith with ſeparate communities. Otherwiſe competence and power would ſoon be confounded, and no law be left but the will of a prevailing force. On this principle the ſucceſſion of the crown has always been what it now is, an hereditary ſucceſſion by law: in the old line it was a ſucceſſion by the common law; in the new by the ſtatute law, operating on the principles of the common law, not changing the ſubſtance, but regulating the mode, and deſcribing the perſons. Both theſe deſcriptions of law are of the ſame force, and are derived from an equal authority, emanating from the common agreement and original compact of the ſtate, *communi ſponſione reipublicæ*, and as ſuch are equally binding on king, and people too, as long as the terms are obſerved, and they continue the ſame body politic.

It is far from impoſſible to reconcile, if we do not ſuffer ourſelves to be entangled in the mazes of metaphyſic ſophiſtry, the uſe both of a fixed rule and an occaſional deviation; the ſacredneſs of an hereditary principle of ſucceſſion in our government, with a power of change in its application in caſes of extreme emergency. Even in that extremity (if we take the meaſure of our rights by our exerciſe of them at the revolution) the change is to be confined to the peccant part only; to the part which produced the neceſſary deviation; and even then it is to be effected without a decompoſition of the whole civil and political maſs, for the purpoſe of originating a new civil order out of the firſt elements of ſociety.

A ſtate without the means of ſome change is without the means

means of its conſervation. Without ſuch means it might even riſque the loſs of that part of the conſtitution which it wiſhed the moſt religiouſly to preſerve. The two principles of conſervation and correction operated ſtrongly at the two critical periods of the reſtoration and revolution, when England found itſelf without a king. At both thoſe periods the nation had loſt the bond of union in their antient edifice; they did not, however, diſſolve the whole fabric. On the contrary, in both caſes they regenerated the deficient part of the old conſtitution through the parts which were not impaired. They kept theſe old parts exactly as they were, that the part recovered might be ſuited to them. They acted by the antient organized ſtates in the ſhape of their old organization, and not by the organic *moleculæ* of a diſbanded people. At no time, perhaps, did the ſovereign legiſlature manifeſt a more tender regard to that fundamental principle of Britiſh conſtitutional policy, than at the time of the revolution, when it deviated from the direct line of hereditary ſucceſſion. The crown was carried ſomewhat out of the line in which it had before moved; but the new line was derived from the ſame ſtock. It was ſtill a line of hereditary deſcent; ſtill an hereditary deſcent in the ſame blood, though an hereditary deſcent qualified with proteſtantiſm. When the legiſlature altered the direction, but kept the principle, they ſhewed that they held it inviolable.

On this principle, the law of inheritance had admitted ſome amendment in the old time, and long before the æra of the revolution. Some time after the conqueſt great queſtions aroſe upon the legal principles of hereditary deſcent. It became a matter of doubt, whether the heir *per capita* or the heir *per ſtirpes* was to ſucceed; but whether the heir *per capita* gave way when the heirdom *per ſtirpes* took place, or

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the catholic heir when the proteſtant was preferred, the inheritable principle ſurvived with a ſort of immortality through all tranſmigrations—*multoſque per annos ſtat fortuna domus et avi numerantur avorum.* This is the ſpirit of our conſtitution, not only in its ſettled courſe, but in all its revolutions. Whoever came in, or however he came in, whether he obtained the crown by law, or by force, the hereditary ſucceſſion was either continued or adopted.

The gentlemen of the ſociety for revolutions ſee nothing in that of 1688 but the deviation from the conſtitution; and they take the deviation from the principle for the principle. They have little regard to the obvious conſequences of their doctrine, though they muſt ſee, that it leaves poſitive authority in very few of the poſitive inſtitutions of this country. When ſuch an unwarrantable maxim is once eſtabliſhed, that no throne is lawful but the elective, no one act of the princes who preceded their æra of fictitious election can be valid. Do theſe theoriſts mean to imitate ſome of their predeceſſors, who dragged the bodies of our antient ſovereigns out of the quiet of their tombs? Do they mean to attaint and diſable backwards all the kings that have reigned before the revolution, and conſequently to ſtain the throne of England with the blot of a continual uſurpation? Do they mean to invalidate, annul, or to call into queſtion, together with the titles of the whole line of our kings, that great body of our ſtatute law which paſſed under thoſe whom they treat as uſurpers? to annul laws of ineſtimable value to our liberties—of as great value at leaſt as any which have paſſed at or ſince the period of the revolution? If kings, who did not owe their crown to the choice of their people, had no title to make laws, what will become of the ſtatute *de tallagio non concedendo*?—of the *petition of right*?—of the act of *habeas corpus*? Do theſe new doctors of the rights of

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men preſume to aſſert, that King James the Second, who came to the crown as next of blood, according to the rules of a then unqualified ſucceſſion, was not to all intents and purpoſes a lawful king of England, before he had done any of thoſe acts which were juſtly conſtrued into an abdication of his crown? If he was not, much trouble in parliament might have been ſaved at the period theſe gentlemen commemorate. But King James was a bad king with a good title, and not an uſurper. The princes who ſucceeded according to the act of parliament which ſettled the crown on the electreſs Sophia and on her deſcendants, being Proteſtants, came in as much by a title of inheritance as King James did. He came in according to the law, as it ſtood at his acceſſion to the crown; and the princes of the houſe of Brunſwick came to the inheritance of the crown, not by election, but by the law, as it ſtood at their ſeveral acceſſions of Proteſtant deſcent and inheritance, as I hope I have ſhewn ſufficiently.

The law by which this royal family is ſpecifically deſtined to the ſucceſſion, is the act of the 12th and 13th of King William. The terms of this act bind "us and our *heirs*, "and our *poſterity*, to them, their *heirs*, and their *poſterity*," being Proteſtants, to the end of time, in the ſame words as the declaration of right had bound us to the heirs of King William and Queen Mary. It therefore ſecures both an hereditary crown and an hereditary allegiance. On what ground, except the conſtitutional policy of forming an eſtabliſhment to ſecure that kind of ſucceſſion which is to preclude a choice of the people for ever, could the legiſlature have faſtidiouſly rejected the fair and abundant choice which our own country preſented to them, and ſearched in ſtrange lands for a foreign princeſs, from whoſe womb the line of our

our future rulers were to derive their title to govern millions of men through a ſeries of ages?

The Princeſs Sophia was named in the act of ſettlement of the 12th and 13th of King William, for a *ſtock* and root of *inheritance* to our kings, and not for her merits as a temporary adminiſtratrix of a power, which ſhe might not, and in fact did not, herſelf ever exerciſe. She was adopted for one reaſon, and for one only, becauſe, ſays the act, "the "moſt excellent Princeſs Sophia, Electreſs and Dutcheſs "Dowager of Hanover, is *daughter* of the moſt excellent "Princeſs Elizabeth, late Queen of Bohemia, *daughter* of "our late *ſovereign lord* King James the Firſt, of happy "memory, and is hereby declared to be the next in *ſucceſ-* "*ſion* in the Proteſtant line," &c. &c.; "and the crown "ſhall continue to the *heirs* of her body, being Proteſtants." This limitation was made by parliament, that through the Princeſs Sophia an inheritable line, not only was to be continued in future but (what they thought very material) that through her it was to be connected with the old ſtock of inheritance in King James the Firſt; in order that the monarchy might preſerve an unbroken unity through all ages, and might be preſerved (with ſafety to our religion) in the old approved mode by deſcent, in which, if our liberties had been once endangered, they had often, through all ſtorms and ſtruggles of prerogative and privilege, been preſerved. They did well. No experience has taught us, that in any other courſe or method than that of an *hereditary crown*, our liberties can be regularly perpetuated and preſerved ſacred as our *hereditary right*. An irregular, convulſive movement may be neceſſary to throw off an irregular, convulſive diſeaſe. But the courſe of ſucceſſion is the healthy habit of the Britiſh conſtitution. Was it that the legiſlature wanted, at the

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act for the limitation of the crown in the Hanoverian line, drawn through the female deſcendants of James the Firſt, a due ſenſe of the inconveniencies of having two or three, or poſſibly more, foreigners in ſucceſſion to the Britiſh throne? No!—they had a due ſenſe of the evils which might happen from ſuch foreign rule, and more than a due ſenſe of them. But a more deciſive proof cannot be given of the full conviction of the Britiſh nation, that the principles of the revolution did not authorize them to elect kings at their pleaſure, and without any attention to the antient fundamental principles of our government, than their continuing to adopt a plan of hereditary Proteſtant ſucceſſion in the old line, with all the dangers and all the inconveniencies of its being a foreign line full before their eyes, and operating with the utmoſt force upon their minds.

A few years ago I ſhould be aſhamed to overload a matter, ſo capable of ſupporting itſelf, by the then unneceſſary ſupport of any argument; but this ſeditious, unconſtitutional doctrine is now publicly taught, avowed, and printed. The diſlike I feel to revolutions, the ſignals for which have ſo often been given from pulpits; the ſpirit of change that is gone abroad; the total contempt which prevails with you, and may come to prevail with us, of all antient inſtitutions, when ſet in oppoſition to a preſent ſenſe of convenience, or to the bent of a preſent inclination: all theſe conſiderations make it not unadviſeable, in my opinion, to call back our attention to the true principles of our own domeſtic laws; that you, my French friend, ſhould begin to know, and that we ſhould continue to cheriſh them. We ought not, on either ſide of the water, to ſuffer ourſelves to be impoſed upon by the counterfeit wares which ſome perſons, by a double fraud, export to you in illicit bottoms, as raw commodities of Britiſh growth though wholly alien to our ſoil,

in order afterwards to ſmuggle them back again into this country, manufactured after the neweſt Paris faſhion of an improved liberty.

The people of England will not ape the faſhions they have never tried; nor go back to thoſe which they have found miſchievous on trial. They look upon the legal hereditary ſucceſſion of their crown as among their rights, not as among their wrongs; as a benefit, not as a grievance; as a ſecurity for their liberty, not as a badge of ſervitude. They look on the frame of their commonwealth, *ſuch as it ſtands*, to be of ineſtimable value; and they conceive the undiſturbed ſucceſſion of the crown to be a pledge of the ſtability and perpetuity of all the other members of our conſtitution.

I ſhall beg leave, before I go any further, to take notice of ſome paltry artifices, which the abettors of election as the only lawful title to the crown, are ready to employ, in order to render the ſupport of the juſt principles of our conſtitution a taſk ſomewhat invidious. Theſe ſophiſters ſubſtitute a fictitious cauſe, and feigned perſonages, in whoſe favour they ſuppoſe you engaged, whenever you defend the inheritable nature of the crown. It is common with them to diſpute as if they were in a conflict with ſome of thoſe exploded fanatics of ſlavery, who formerly maintained, what I believe no creature now maintains, "that the crown is held "by divine, hereditary, and indefeaſible right."—Theſe old fanatics of ſingle arbitrary power dogmatized as if hereditary royalty was the only lawful government in the world, juſt as our new fanatics of popular arbitrary power, maintain that a popular election is the ſole lawful ſource of authority. The old prerogative enthuſiaſts, it is true, did ſpeculate fooliſhly, and perhaps impiouſly too, as if monarchy had more of a divine ſanction than any other mode of government; and as if a right to govern by inheritance were in ſtrictneſs *inde-*

feaſible in every perſon, who ſhould be found in the ſucceſſion to a throne, and under every circumſtance, which no civil or political right can be. But an abſurd opinion concerning the king's hereditary right to the crown does not prejudice one that is rational, and bottomed upon ſolid principles of law and policy. If all the abſurd theories of lawyers and divines were to vitiate the objects in which they are converſant, we ſhould have no law, and no religion, left in the world. But an abſurd theory on one ſide of a queſtion forms no juſtification for alledging a falſe fact, or promulgating miſchievous maxims on the other.

The ſecond claim of the revolution ſociety is "a right of "caſhiering their governors for *miſconduct*." Perhaps the apprehenſions our anceſtors entertained of forming ſuch a precedent as that "of caſhiering for miſconduct," was the cauſe that the declaration of the act which implied the abdication of King James, was, if it had any fault, rather too guarded, and too circumſtantial *. But all this guard, and all this accumulation of circumſtances, ſerves to ſhew the ſpirit of caution which predominated in the national councils, in a ſituation in which men irritated by oppreſſion, and elevated by a triumph over it, are apt to abandon themſelves to violent and extreme courſes: it ſhews the anxiety of the great men who influenced the conduct of affairs at that great event, to make the revolution a parent of ſettlement, and not a nurſery of future revolutions.

No government could ſtand a moment, if it could be blown down with any thing ſo looſe and indefinite as an opinion of

* "That King James the Second, having endeavoured to *ſubvert the conſtitution* of the "kingdom, by breaking the *original contract* between king and people, and by the advice of "jeſuits, and other wicked perſons, having violated the *fundamental* laws, and *having with-*"*drawn himſelf out of the kingdom*, hath *abdicated* the government, and the throne is thereby "*vacant*."

"*miſconduct.*" They who led at the revolution, grounded the virtual abdication of King James upon no ſuch light and uncertain principle. They charged him with nothing leſs than a deſign, confirmed by a multitude of illegal overt acts, to *ſubvert the Proteſtant church and ſtate*, and their *fundamental*, unqueſtionable laws and liberties: they charged him with having broken the *original contract* between king and people. This was more than *miſconduct*. A grave and overruling neceſſity obliged them to take the ſtep they took, and took with infinite reluctance, as under that moſt rigorous of all laws. Their truſt for the future preſervation of the conſtitution was not in future revolutions. The grand policy of all their regulations was to render it almoſt impracticable for any future ſovereign to compel the ſtates of the kingdom to have again recourſe to thoſe violent remedies. They left the crown what, in the eye and eſtimation of law, it had ever been, perfectly irreſponſible. In order to lighten the crown ſtill further, they aggravated reſponſibility on miniſters of ſtate. By the ſtatute of the 1ſt of King William, ſeſſ. 2d, called "*the act for declaring the rights and liberties of the ſubject, and for ſettling the ſucceſſion of the crown*," they enacted, that the miniſters ſhould ſerve the crown on the terms of that declaration. They ſecured ſoon after the *frequent meetings of parliament*, by which the whole government would be under the conſtant inſpection and active controul of the popular repreſentative and of the magnates of the kingdom. In the next great conſtitutional act, that of the 12th and 13th of King William, for the further limitation of the crown, and *better* ſecuring the rights and liberties of the ſubject, they provided, "that no pardon under "the great ſeal of England ſhould be pleadable to an im-"peachment by the commons in parliament." The rule laid down for government in the declaration of right, the conſtant

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inſpection of parliament, the practical claim of impeachment, they thought infinitely a better ſecurity not only for their conſtitutional liberty, but againſt the vices of adminiſtration, than the reſervation of a right ſo difficult in the practice, ſo uncertain in the iſſue, and often ſo miſchievous in the conſequences, as that of "caſhiering their go-"vernors."

Dr. Price, in this ſermon *, condemns very properly the practice of groſs, adulatory addreſſes to kings. Inſtead of this fulſome ſtyle, he propoſes that his majeſty ſhould be told, on occaſions of congratulation, that "he is to conſider "himſelf as more properly the ſervant than the ſovereign "of his people." For a compliment, this new form of addreſs does not ſeem to be very ſoothing. Thoſe who are ſervants, in name, as well as in effect, do not like to be told of their ſituation, their duty, and their obligations. The ſlave, in the old play, tells his maſter, "*Hæc commemoratio* "*eſt quaſi exprobratio.*" It is not pleaſant as compliment; it is not wholeſome as inſtruction. After all, if the king were to bring himſelf to echo this new kind of addreſs, to adopt it in terms, and even to take the appellation of Servant of the People as his royal ſtyle, how either he or we ſhould be much mended by it, I cannot imagine. I have ſeen very aſſuming letters, ſigned, Your moſt obedient, humble ſervant. The proudeſt domination that ever was endured on earth took a title of ſtill greater humility than that which is now propoſed for ſovereigns by the Apoſtle of Liberty. Kings and nations were trampled upon by the foot of one calling himſelf "the Servant of Servants;" and mandates for depoſing ſovereigns were ſealed with the ſignet of "the Fiſher-"man."

I ſhould have conſidered all this as no more than a ſort of

* P. 22, 23, 24.

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ſlippant vain diſcourſe, in which, as in an unſavoury ſume, ſeveral perſons ſuffer the ſpirit of liberty to evaporate, if it were not plainly in ſupport of the idea, and a part of the ſcheme of "caſhiering kings for miſconduct." In that light it is worth ſome obſervation.

Kings, in one ſenſe, are undoubtedly the ſervants of the people, becauſe their power has no other rational end than that of the general advantage; but it is not true that they are, in the ordinary ſenſe (by our conſtitution, at leaſt) any thing like ſervants; the eſſence of whoſe ſituation is to obey the commands of ſome other, and to be removeable at pleaſure. But the king of Great Britain obeys no other perſon; all other perſons are individually, and collectively too, under him, and owe to him a legal obedience. The law, which knows neither to flatter nor to inſult, calls this high magiſtrate, not our ſervant, as this humble Divine calls him, but "*our ſovereign Lord the King*;" and we, on our parts, have learned to ſpeak only the primitive language of the law, and not the confuſed jargon of their Babylonian pulpits.

As he is not to obey us, but as we are to obey the law in him, our conſtitution has made no ſort of proviſion towards rendering him, as a ſervant, in any degree reſponſible. Our conſtitution knows nothing of a magiſtrate like the *Juſticia* of Arragon; nor of any court legally appointed, nor of any proceſs legally ſettled for ſubmitting the king to the reſponſibility belonging to all ſervants. In this he is not diſtinguiſhed from the commons and the lords; who, in their ſeveral public capacities, can never be called to an account for their conduct; although the revolution ſociety chooſes to aſſert, in direct oppoſition to one of the wiſeſt and moſt beautiful parts of our conſtitution, that "a king is no more "than the firſt ſervant of the public, created by it, *and re-* "*ſponſible to it.*"

Ill would our anceſtors at the revolution have deſerved their fame for wiſdom, if they had found no ſecurity for their freedom, but in rendering their government feeble in its operations, and precarious in its tenure; if they had been able to contrive no better remedy againſt arbitrary power than civil confuſion. Let theſe gentlemen ſtate who that *repreſentative* public is to whom they will affirm the king, as a ſervant, to be reſponſible. It will be then time enough for me to produce to them the poſitive ſtatute law which affirms that he is not.

The ceremony of caſhiering kings, of which theſe gentlemen talk ſo much at their eaſe, can rarely, if ever, be performed without force. It then becomes a caſe of war, and not of conſtitution. Laws are commanded to hold their tongues amongſt arms; and tribunals fall to the ground with the peace they are no longer able to uphold. The revolution of 1688 was obtained by a juſt war, in the only caſe in which any war, and much more a civil war, can be juſt. "Juſta "bella quibus *neceſſaria*." The queſtion of dethroning, or, if theſe gentlemen like the phraſe better, "caſhiering kings," will always be, as it has always been, an extraordinary queſtion of ſtate, and wholly out of the law; a queſtion (like all other queſtions of ſtate) of diſpoſitions, and of means, and of probable conſequences, rather than of poſitive rights. As it was not made for common abuſes, ſo it is not to be agitated by common minds. The ſpeculative line of demarcation, where obedience ought to end, and reſiſtance muſt begin, is faint, obſcure, and not eaſily definable. It is not a ſingle act, or a ſingle event, which determines it. Governments muſt be abuſed and deranged indeed, before it can be thought of; and the proſpect of the future muſt be as bad as the experience of the paſt. When things are in that lamentable condition, the nature of the diſeaſe is to indicate the remedy to thoſe whom nature has

has qualified to adminiſter in extremities this critical, ambiguous, bitter potion to a diſtempered ſtate. Times and occaſions, and provocations, will teach their own leſſons. The wiſe will determine from the gravity of the caſe; the irritable from ſenſibility to oppreſſion; the high-minded from diſdain and indignation at abuſive power in unworthy hands; the brave and bold from the love of honourable danger in a generous cauſe: but, with or without right, a revolution will be the very laſt reſource of the thinking and the good.

The third head of right, aſſerted by the pulpit of the Old Jewry, namely, the "right to form a government for our-"ſelves," has, at leaſt, as little countenance from any thing done at the revolution, either in precedent or principle, as the two firſt of their claims. The revolution was made to preſerve our *antient* indiſputable laws and liberties, and that *antient* conſtitution of government which is our only ſecurity for law and liberty. If you are deſirous of knowing the ſpirit of our conſtitution, and the policy which predominated in that great period which has ſecured it to this hour, pray look for both in our hiſtories, in our records, in our acts of parliament, and journals of parliament, and not in the ſermons of the Old Jewry, and the after-dinner toaſts of the revolution ſociety.—In the former you will find other ideas and another language. Such a claim is as ill-ſuited to our temper and wiſhes as it is unſupported by any appearance of authority. The very idea of the fabrication of a new government, is enough to fill us with diſguſt and horror. We wiſhed at the period of the revolution, and do now wiſh, to derive all we poſſeſs as *an inheritance from our forefathers*. Upon that body and ſtock of inheritance we have taken care not to inoculate any cyon alien to the nature of the original plant. All the reformations we have hitherto made, have

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proceeded upon the principle of reference to antiquity; and I hope, nay I am perſuaded, that all thoſe which poſſibly may be made hereafter, will be carefully formed upon analogical precedent, authority, and example.

Our oldeſt reformation is that of Magna Charta. You will ſee that Sir Edward Coke, that great oracle of our law, and indeed all the great men who follow him, to Blackſtone *, are induſtrious to prove the pedigree of our liberties. They endeavour to prove, that the antient charter, the magna charta of King John, was connected with another poſitive charter from Henry I. and that both the one and the other were nothing more than a re-affirmance of the ſtill more antient ſtanding law of the kingdom. In the matter of fact, for the greater part, theſe authors appear to be in the right; perhaps not always; but if the lawyers miſtake in ſome particulars, it proves my poſition ſtill the more ſtrongly; becauſe it demonſtrates the powerful prepoſſeſſion towards antiquity, with which the minds of all our lawyers and legiſlators, and of all the people whom they wiſh to influence, have been always filled; and the ſtationary policy of this kingdom in conſidering their moſt ſacred rights and franchiſes as an *inheritance*.

In the famous law of the 3d of Charles I. called the *Petition of Right*, the parliament ſays to the king, "Your ſubjects have *inherited* this freedom," claiming their franchiſes not on abſtract principles "as the rights of men," but as the rights of Engliſhmen, and as a patrimony derived from their forefathers. Selden, and the other profoundly learned men, who drew this petition of right, were as well acquainted, at leaſt, with all the general theories concerning the "rights of men," as any of the diſcourſers in our pulpits,

* See Blackſtone's Magna Charta, printed at Oxford, 1759.

or on your tribune; full as well as Dr. Price, or as the Abbé Seyes. But, for reaſons worthy of that practical wiſdom which ſuperſeded their theoretic ſcience, they preferred this poſitive, recorded, *hereditary* title to all which can be dear to the man and the citizen, to that vague ſpeculative right, which expoſed their ſure inheritance to be ſcrambled for and torn to pieces by every wild litigious ſpirit.

The ſame policy pervades all the laws which have ſince been made for the preſervation of our liberties. In the 1ſt of William and Mary, in the famous ſtatute, called the Declaration of Right, the two houſes utter not a ſyllable of "a "right to frame a government for themſelves." You will ſee, that their whole care was to ſecure the religion, laws, and liberties, that had been long poſſeſſed, and had been lately endangered. "Taking * into their moſt ſerious "conſideration the *beſt* means for making ſuch an eſtabliſh-"ment, that their religion, laws, and liberties, might not "be in danger of being again ſubverted," they auſpicate all their proceedings, by ſtating as ſome of thoſe *beſt* means, "in the *firſt place*" to do "as their *anceſtors in like caſes have* "*uſually* done for vindicating their *antient* rights and liber-"ties, to *declare*;"—and then they pray the king and queen, "that it may be *declared* and enacted, that *all and ſingular* "the rights and liberties *aſſerted and declared* are the true "*antient* and indubitable rights and liberties of the people "of this kingdom."

You will obſerve, that from magna charta to the declaration of right, it has been the uniform policy of our conſtitution to claim and aſſert our liberties, as an *entailed inheritance* derived to us from our forefathers, and to be tranſmitted to our poſterity; as an eſtate ſpecially belonging to the people of this kingdom without any reference whatever

* 1 W. and M.

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to any other more general or prior right. By this means our conſtitution preſerves an unity in ſo great a diverſity of its parts. We have an inheritable crown; an inheritable peerage; and an houſe of commons and a people inheriting privileges, franchiſes, and liberties, from a long line of anceſtors.

This policy appears to me to be the reſult of profound reflection; or rather the happy effect of following nature, which is wiſdom without reflection, and above it. A ſpirit of innovation is generally the reſult of a ſelfiſh temper and confined views. People will not look forward to poſterity, who never look backward to their anceſtors. Beſides, the people of England well know, that the idea of inheritance furniſhes a ſure principle of conſervation, and a ſure principle of tranſmiſſion; without at all excluding a principle of improvement. It leaves acquiſition free; but it ſecures what it acquires. Whatever advantages are obtained by a ſtate proceeding on theſe maxims, are locked faſt as in a ſort of family ſettlement; graſped as in a kind of mortmain for ever. By a conſtitutional policy, working after the pattern of nature, we receive, we hold, we tranſmit our government and our privileges, in the ſame manner in which we enjoy and tranſmit our property and our lives. The inſtitutions of policy, the goods of fortune, the gifts of Providence, are handed down, to us and from us, in the ſame courſe and order. Our political ſyſtem is placed in a juſt correſpondence and ſymmetry with the order of the world, and with the mode of exiſtence decreed to a permanent body compoſed of tranſitory parts; wherein, by the diſpoſition of a ſtupendous wiſdom, moulding together the great myſterious incorporation of the human race, the whole, at one time, is never old, or middle-aged, or young, but in a condition of unchangeable conſtancy, moves on through the varied tenour

of perpetual decay, fall, renovation, and progreſſion. Thus, by preſerving the method of nature in the conduct of the ſtate, in what we improve we are never wholly new; in what we retain, we are never wholly obſolete. By adhering in this manner and on thoſe principles to our forefathers, we are guided not by the ſuperſtition of antiquarians, but by the ſpirit of philoſophic analogy. In this choice of inheritance we have given to our frame of polity the image of a relation in blood; binding up the conſtitution of our country with our deareſt domeſtic ties; adopting our fundamental laws into the boſom of our family affections; keeping inſeparable, and cheriſhing with the warmth of all their combined and mutually reflected charities, our ſtate, our hearths, our ſepulchres, and our altars.

Through the ſame plan of a conformity to nature in our artificial inſtitutions, and by calling in the aid of her unerring and powerful inſtincts, to fortify the fallible and feeble contrivances of our reaſon, we have derived ſeveral other, and thoſe no ſmall benefits, from conſidering our liberties in the light of an inheritance. Always acting as if in the preſence of canonized forefathers, the ſpirit of freedom, leading in itſelf to miſrule and exceſs, is tempered with an awful gravity. This idea of a liberal deſcent inſpires us with a ſenſe of habitual native dignity, which prevents that upſtart inſolence almoſt inevitably adhering to and diſgracing thoſe who are the firſt acquirers of any diſtinction. By this means our liberty becomes a noble freedom. It carries an impoſing and majeſtic aſpect. It has a pedigree and illuſtrating anceſtors. It has its bearings and its enſigns armorial. It has its gallery of portraits; its monumental inſcriptions; its records, evidences, and titles. We procure reverence to our civil inſtitutions on the principle upon which nature teaches us to revere individual men; on account of their age; and

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on account of thoſe from whom they are deſcended. All your ſophiſters cannot produce any thing better adapted to preſerve a rational and manly freedom than the courſe that we have purſued, who have choſen our nature rather than our ſpeculations, our breaſts rather than our inventions, for the great conſervatories and magazines of our rights and privileges.

You might, if you pleaſed, have profited of our example, and have given to your recovered freedom a correſpondent dignity. Your privileges, though diſcontinued, were not loſt to memory. Your conſtitution, it is true, whilſt you were out of poſſeſſion, ſuffered waſte and dilapidation; but you poſſeſſed in ſome parts the walls, and in all the foundations of a noble and venerable caſtle. You might have repaired thoſe walls; you might have built on thoſe old foundations. Your conſtitution was ſuſpended before it was perfected; but you had the elements of a conſtitution very nearly as good as could be wiſhed. In your old ſtates you poſſeſſed that variety of parts correſponding with the various deſcriptions of which your community was happily compoſed; you had all that combination, and all that oppoſition of intereſts, you had that action and counteraction which, in the natural and in the political world, from the reciprocal ſtruggle of diſcordant powers, draws out the harmony of the univerſe. Theſe oppoſed and conflicting intereſts, which you conſidered as ſo great a blemiſh in your old and in our preſent conſtitution, interpoſe a ſalutary check to all precipitate reſolutions. They render deliberation a matter not of choice, but of neceſſity; they make all change a ſubject of *compromiſe*, which naturally begets moderation; they produce *temperaments*, preventing the ſore evil of harſh, crude, unqualified reformations; and rendering all the headlong exertions of arbitrary power, in the few or in the many, for

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ever impracticable. Through that diverſity of members and intereſts, general liberty had as many ſecurities as there were ſeparate views in the ſeveral orders; whilſt by preſſing down the whole by the weight of a real monarchy, the ſeparate parts would have been prevented from warping and ſtarting from their allotted places.

You had all theſe advantages in your antient ſtates; but you choſe to act as if you had never been moulded into civil ſociety, and had every thing to begin anew. You began ill, becauſe you began by deſpiſing every thing that belonged to you. You ſet up your trade without a capital. If the laſt generations of your country appeared without much luſtre in your eyes, you might have paſſed them by, and derived your claims from a more early race of anceſtors. Under a pious predilection for thoſe anceſtors, your imaginations would have realized in them a ſtandard of virtue and wiſdom, beyond the vulgar practice of the hour: and you would have riſen with the example to whoſe imitation you aſpired. Reſpecting your forefathers, you would have been taught to reſpect yourſelves. You would not have choſen to conſider the French as a people of yeſterday, as a nation of low-born ſervile wretches until the emancipating year of 1789. In order to furniſh, at the expence of your honour, an excuſe to your apologiſts here for ſeveral enormities of yours, you would not have been content to be repreſented as a gang of Maroon ſlaves, ſuddenly broke looſe from the houſe of bondage, and therefore to be pardoned for your abuſe of the liberty to which you were not accuſtomed and ill fitted. Would it not, my worthy friend, have been wiſer to have you thought, what I, for one, always thought you, a generous and gallant nation, long miſled to your diſadvantage by your high and romantic ſentiments of fidelity, honour, and loyalty; that events had been unfavourable to

you,

you, but that you were not enſlaved through any illiberal or ſervile diſpoſition; that in your moſt devoted ſubmiſſion, you were actuated by a principle of public ſpirit, and that it was your country you worſhipped, in the perſon of your king? Had you made it to be underſtood, that in the deluſion of this amiable error you had gone further than your wiſe anceſtors; that you were reſolved to reſume your antient privileges, whilſt you preſerved the ſpirit of your antient and your recent loyalty and honour; or, if diffident of yourſelves, and not clearly diſcerning the almoſt obliterated conſtitution of your anceſtors, you had looked to your neighbours in this land, who had kept alive the antient principles and models of the old common law of Europe meliorated and adapted to its preſent ſtate—by following wiſe examples you would have given new examples of wiſdom to the world. You would have rendered the cauſe of liberty venerable in the eyes of every worthy mind in every nation. You would have ſhamed deſpotiſm from the earth, by ſhewing that freedom was not only reconcileable, but as, when well diſciplined, it is, auxiliary to law. You would have had an unoppreſſive but a productive revenue. You would have had a flouriſhing commerce to feed it. You would have had a free conſtitution; a potent monarchy; a diſciplined army; a reformed and venerated clergy; a mitigated but ſpirited nobility, to lead your virtue, not to overlay it; you would have had a liberal order of commons, to emulate and to recruit that nobility; you would have had a protected, ſatisfied, laborious, and obedient people, taught to ſeek and to recognize the happineſs that is to be found by virtue in all conditions; in which conſiſts the true moral equality of mankind, and not in that monſtrous fiction, which, by inſpiring falſe ideas and vain expectations into men deſtined to travel in the obſcure walk of laborious life, ſerves only to aggravate and

imbitter that real inequality, which it never can remove; and which the order of civil life eſtabliſhes as much for the benefit of thoſe whom it muſt leave in an humble ſtate, as thoſe whom it is able to exalt to a condition more ſplendid, but not more happy. You had a ſmooth and eaſy career of felicity and glory laid open to you, beyond any thing recorded in the hiſtory of the world; but you have ſhewn that difficulty is good for man.

Compute your gains: ſee what is got by thoſe extravagant and preſumptuous ſpeculations which have taught your leaders to deſpiſe all their predeceſſors, and all their contemporaries, and even to deſpiſe themſelves, until the moment in which they became truly deſpicable. By following thoſe falſe lights, France has bought undiſguiſed calamities at a higher price than any nation has purchaſed the moſt unequivocal bleſſings! France has bought poverty by crime! France has not ſacrificed her virtue to her intereſt; but ſhe has abandoned her intereſt, that ſhe might proſtitute her virtue. All other nations have begun the fabric of a new government, or the reformation of an old, by eſtabliſhing originally, or by enforcing with greater exactneſs ſome rites or other of religion. All other people have laid the foundations of civil freedom in ſeverer manners, and a ſyſtem of a more auſtere and maſculine morality. France, when ſhe let looſe the reins of regal authority, doubled the licence of a ferocious diſſoluteneſs in manners, and of an inſolent irreligion in opinions and practices; and has extended through all ranks of life, as if ſhe were communicating ſome privilege, or laying open ſome ſecluded benefit, all the unhappy corruptions that uſually were the diſeaſe of wealth and power. This is one of the new principles of equality in France.

France, by the perfidy of her leaders, has utterly diſgraced

the tone of lenient council in the cabinets of princes, and diſarmed it of its moſt potent topics. She has ſanctified the dark ſuſpicious maxims of tyrannous diſtruſt; and taught kings to tremble at (what will hereafter be called) the deluſive plauſibilities, of moral politicians. Sovereigns will conſider thoſe who adviſe them to place an unlimited confidence in their people, as ſubverters of their thrones; as traitors who aim at their deſtruction, by leading their eaſy good-nature, under ſpecious pretences, to admit combinations of bold and faithleſs men into a participation of their power. This alone (if there were nothing elſe) is an irreparable calamity to you and to mankind. Remember that your parliament of Paris told your king, that in calling the ſtates together, he had nothing to fear but the prodigal exceſs of their zeal in providing for the ſupport of the throne. It is right that theſe men ſhould hide their heads. It is right that they ſhould bear their part in the ruin which their counſel has brought on their ſovereign and their country. Such ſanguine declarations tend to lull authority aſleep; to encourage it raſhly to engage in perilous adventures of untried policy; to neglect thoſe proviſions, preparations, and precautions, which diſtinguiſh benevolence from imbecillity; and without which no man can anſwer for the ſalutary effect of any abſtract plan of government or of freedom. For want of theſe, they have ſeen the medicine of the ſtate corrupted into its poiſon. They have ſeen the French rebel againſt a mild and lawful monarch, with more fury, outrage, and inſult, than ever any people has been known to riſe againſt the moſt illegal uſurper, or the moſt ſanguinary tyrant. Their reſiſtance was made to conceſſion; their revolt was from protection; their blow was aimed at an hand holding out graces, favours, and immunities.

This was unnatural. The reſt is in order. They have

found their puniſhment in their ſucceſs. Laws overturned; tribunals ſubverted; induſtry without vigour; commerce expiring; the revenue unpaid, yet the people impoveriſhed; a church pillaged, and a ſtate not relieved; civil and military anarchy made the conſtitution of the kingdom; every thing human and divine ſacrificed to the idol of public credit, and national bankruptcy the conſequence; and to crown all, the paper ſecurities of new, precarious, tottering power, the diſcredited paper ſecurities of impoveriſhed fraud, and beggared rapine, held out as a currency for the ſupport of an empire, in lieu of the two great recognized ſpecies that repreſent the laſting conventional credit of mankind, which diſappeared and hid themſelves in the earth from whence they came, when the principle of property, whoſe creatures and repreſentatives they are, was ſyſtematically ſubverted.

Were all theſe dreadful things neceſſary? were they the inevitable reſults of the deſperate ſtruggle of determined patriots, compelled to wade through blood and tumult, to the quiet ſhore of a tranquil and proſperous liberty? No! nothing like it. The freſh ruins of France, which ſhock our feelings wherever we can turn our eyes, are not the devaſtation of civil war; they are the ſad but inſtructive monuments of raſh and ignorant counſel in time of profound peace. They are the diſplay of inconſiderate and preſumptuous, becauſe unreſiſted and irreſiſtible authority. The perſons who have thus ſquandered away the precious treaſure of their crimes, the perſons who have made this prodigal and wild waſte of public evils (the laſt ſtake reſerved for the ultimate ranſom of the ſtate) have met in their progreſs with little, or rather with no oppoſition at all. Their whole march was more like a triumphal proceſſion than the progreſs of a war. Their pioneers have gone before them, and demoliſhed and laid every thing level at their

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feet. Not one drop of *their* blood have they ſhed in the cauſe of the country they have ruined. They have made no ſacrifices to their projects of greater conſequence than their ſhoe-buckles, whilſt they were impriſoning their king, murdering their fellow citizens, and bathing in tears, and plunging in poverty and diſtreſs, thouſands of worthy men and worthy families. Their cruelty has not even been the baſe reſult of fear. It has been the effect of their ſenſe of perfect ſafety, in authorizing treaſons, robberies, rapes, aſſaſſinations, ſlaughters, and burnings throughout their haraſſed land. But the cauſe of all was plain from the beginning.

This unforced choice, this fond election of evil, would appear perfectly unaccountable, if we did not conſider the compoſition of the national aſſembly: I do not mean its formal conſtitution, which, as it now ſtands, is exceptionable enough, but the materials of which in a great meaſure it is compoſed, which is of ten thouſand times greater conſequence than all the formalities in the world. If we were to know nothing of this aſſembly but by its title and function, no colours could paint to the imagination any thing more venerable. In that light the mind of an enquirer, ſubdued by ſuch an awful image as that of the virtue and wiſdom of a whole people collected into a focus, would pauſe and heſitate in condemning things even of the very worſt aſpect. Inſtead of blameable, they would appear only myſterious. But no name, no power, no function, no artificial inſtitution whatſoever, can make the men of whom any ſyſtem of authority is compoſed, any other than God, and nature, and education, and their habits of life have made them. Capacities beyond theſe the people have not to give. Virtue and wiſdom may be the objects of their choice; but their choice confers neither the one nor the other on thoſe upon whom

they lay their ordaining hands. They have not the engagement of nature, they have not the promiſe of revelation for any ſuch powers.

After I had read over the liſt of the perſons and deſcriptions elected into the *Tiers Etat*, nothing which they afterwards did could appear aſtoniſhing. Among them, indeed, I ſaw ſome of known rank; ſome of ſhining talents; but of any practical experience in the ſtate, not one man was to be found. The beſt were only men of theory. But whatever the diſtinguiſhed few may have been, it is the ſubſtance and maſs of the body which conſtitutes its character, and muſt finally determine its direction. In all bodies, thoſe who will lead, muſt alſo, in a conſiderable degree, follow. They muſt conform their propoſitions to the taſte, talent, and diſpoſition of thoſe whom they wiſh to conduct: therefore, if an aſſembly is viciouſly or feebly compoſed in a very great part of it, nothing but ſuch a ſupreme degree of virtue as very rarely appears in the world, and for that reaſon cannot enter into calculation, will prevent the men of talents diſſeminated through it from becoming only the expert inſtruments of abſurd projects! If what is the more likely event, inſtead of that unuſual degree of virtue, they ſhould be actuated by ſiniſter ambition and a luſt of meretricious glory, then the feeble part of the aſſembly, to whom at firſt they conform, becomes in its turn the dupe and inſtrument of their deſigns. In this political traffick the leaders will be obliged to bow to the ignorance of their followers, and the followers to become ſubſervient to the worſt deſigns of their leaders.

To ſecure any degree of ſobriety in the propoſitions made by the leaders in any public aſſembly, they ought to reſpect, in ſome degree perhaps to fear, thoſe whom they conduct. To be led any otherwiſe than blindly, the followers muſt be qualified, if not for actors, at leaſt for judges; they muſt

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alſo be judges of natural weight and authority. Nothing can ſecure a ſteady and moderate conduct in ſuch aſſemblies, but that the body of them ſhould be reſpectably compoſed, in point of condition in life, of permanent property, of education, and of ſuch habits as enlarge and liberalize the underſtanding.

In the calling of the ſtates general of France, the firſt thing which ſtruck me, was a great departure from the antient courſe. I found the repreſentation for the third eſtate compoſed of ſix hundred perſons. They were equal in number to the repreſentatives of both the other orders. If the orders were to act ſeparately, the number would not, beyond the conſideration of the expence, be of much moment. But when it became apparent that the three orders were to be melted down into one, the policy and neceſſary effect of this numerous repreſentation became obvious. A very ſmall deſertion from either of the other two orders muſt throw the power of both into the hands of the third. In fact, the whole power of the ſtate was ſoon reſolved into that body. Its due compoſition became therefore of infinitely the greater importance.

Judge, Sir, of my ſurprize, when I found that a very great proportion of the aſſembly (a majority, I believe, of the members who attended) was compoſed of practitioners in the law. It was compoſed not of diſtinguiſhed magiſtrates, who had given pledges to their country of their ſcience, prudence, and integrity; not of leading advocates, the glory of the bar; not of renowned profeſſors in univerſities;—but for the far greater part, as it muſt in ſuch a number, of the inferior, unlearned, mechanical, merely inſtrumental members of the profeſſion. There were diſtinguiſhed exceptions; but the general compoſition was of obſcure provincial advocates, of ſtewards of petty local juriſdictions, country attornies, notaries,

taries, and the whole train of the miniſters of municipal litigation, the fomentors and conductors of the petty war of village vexation. From the moment I read the liſt I ſaw diſtinctly, and very nearly as it has happened, all that was to follow.

The degree of eſtimation in which any profeſſion is held becomes the ſtandard of the eſtimation in which the profeſſors hold themſelves. Whatever the perſonal merits of many individual lawyers might have been, and in many it was undoubtedly very conſiderable, in that military kingdom, no part of the profeſſion had been much regarded, except the higheſt of all, who often united to their profeſſional offices great family ſplendour, and were inveſted with great power and authority. Theſe certainly were highly reſpected, and even with no ſmall degree of awe. The next rank was not much eſteemed; the mechanical part was in a very low degree of repute.

Whenever the ſupreme authority is inveſted in a body ſo compoſed, it muſt evidently produce the conſequences of ſupreme authority placed in the hands of men not taught habitually to reſpect themſelves; who had no previous fortune in character at ſtake; who could not be expected to bear with moderation, or to conduct with diſcretion, a power which they themſelves, more than any others, muſt be ſurpriſed to find in their hands. Who could flatter himſelf that theſe men, ſuddenly, and, as it were, by enchantment, ſnatched from the humbleſt rank of ſubordination, would not be intoxicated with their unprepared greatneſs? Who could conceive, that men who are habitually meddling, daring, ſubtle, active, of litigious diſpoſitions and unquiet minds, would eaſily fall back into their old condition of obſcure contention, and laborious, low, unprofitable chicane? Who could doubt but that, at any expence to the ſtate, of which they underſtood

ſtood nothing, they muſt purſue their private intereſts, which they underſtood but too well? It was not an event depending on chance or contingency. It was inevitable; it was neceſſary; it was planted in the nature of things. They muſt *join* (if their capacity did not permit them to *lead*) in any project which could procure to them a *litigious conſtitution*; which could lay open to them thoſe innumerable lucrative jobs which follow in the train of all great convulſions and revolutions in the ſtate, and particularly in all great and violent permutations of property. Was it to be expected that they would attend to the ſtability of property, whoſe exiſtence had always depended upon whatever rendered property queſtionable, ambiguous, and inſecure? Their objects would be enlarged with their elevation, but their diſpoſition and habits, and mode of accompliſhing their deſigns, muſt remain the ſame.

Well! but theſe men were to be tempered and reſtrained by other deſcriptions, of more ſober minds, and more enlarged underſtandings. Were they then to be awed by the ſuper-eminent authority and awful dignity of an handful of country clowns who have ſeats in that aſſembly, ſome of whom are ſaid not to be able to read and write? and by not a greater number of traders, who, though ſomewhat more inſtructed, and more conſpicuous in the order of ſociety, had never known any thing beyond their counting-houſe? No! both theſe deſcriptions were more formed to be overborne and ſwayed by the intrigues and artifices of lawyers, than to become their counterpoiſe. With ſuch a dangerous diſproportion, the whole muſt needs be governed by them. To the faculty of law was joined a pretty conſiderable proportion of the faculty of medicine. This faculty had not, any more than that of the law, poſſeſſed in France its juſt eſtimation. Its profeſſors therefore muſt have the qualities of

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men not habituated to ſentiments of dignity. But ſuppoſing they had ranked as they ought to do, and as with us they do actually, the ſides of ſick beds are not the academies for forming ſtateſmen and legiſlators. Then came the dealers in ſtocks and funds, who muſt be eager, at any expence, to change their ideal paper wealth for the more ſolid ſubſtance of land. To theſe were joined men of other deſcriptions, from whom as little knowledge of or attention to the intereſts of a great ſtate was to be expected, and as little regard to the ſtability of any inſtitution; men formed to be inſtruments, not controls. Such in general was the compoſition of the *Tiers Etat* in the national aſſembly; in which was ſcarcely to be perceived the ſlighteſt traces of what we call the natural landed intereſt of the country.

We know that the Britiſh houſe of commons, without ſhutting its doors to any merit in any claſs, is, by the ſure operation of adequate cauſes, filled with every thing illuſtrious in rank, in deſcent, in hereditary and in acquired opulence, in cultivated talents, in military, civil, naval, and politic diſtinction, that the country can afford. But ſuppoſing, what hardly can be ſuppoſed as a caſe, that the houſe of commons ſhould be compoſed in the ſame manner with the Tiers Etat in France, would this dominion of chicane be borne with patience, or even conceived without horror? God forbid I ſhould inſinuate any thing derogatory to that profeſſion, which is another prieſthood, adminiſtering the rites of ſacred juſtice. But whilſt I revere men in the functions which belong to them, and would do, as much as one man can do, to prevent their excluſion from any, I cannot, to flatter them, give the lye to nature. They are good and uſeful in the compoſition; they muſt be miſchievous if they preponderate ſo as virtually to become the whole. Their very excellence in their peculiar functions may be far

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from a qualification for others. It cannot eſcape obſervation, that when men are too much confined to profeſſional and faculty habits, and, as it were, invoterate in the recurrent employment of that narrow circle, they are rather diſabled than qualified for whatever depends on the knowledge of mankind, on experience in mixed affairs, on a comprehenſive connected view of the various complicated external and internal intereſts which go to the formation of that multifarious thing called a ſtate.

After all, if the houſe of commons were to have an wholly profeſſional and faculty compoſition, what is the power of the houſe of commons, circumſcribed and ſhut in by the immoveable barriers of laws, uſages, poſitive rules of doctrine and practice, counterpoized by the houſe of lords, and every moment of its exiſtence at the diſcretion of the crown to continue, prorogue, or diſſolve us? The power of the houſe of commons, direct or indirect, is indeed great; and long may it be able to preſerve its greatneſs, and the ſpirit belonging to true greatneſs, at the full; and it will do ſo, as long as it can keep the breakers of law in India from becoming the makers of law for England. The power, however, of the houſe of commons, when leaſt diminiſhed, is as a drop of water in the ocean, compared to that reſiding in a ſettled majority of your national aſſembly. That aſſembly, ſince the deſtruction of the orders, has no fundamental law, no ſtrict convention, no reſpected uſage to reſtrain it. Inſtead of finding themſelves obliged to conform to a fixed conſtitution, they have a power to make a conſtitution which ſhall conform to their deſigns. Nothing in heaven or upon earth can ſerve as a control on them. What ought to be the heads, the hearts, the diſpoſitions, that are qualified, or that dare, not only to make laws under a fixed conſtitution, but at one heat to ſtrike out a totally new conſtitution for a great

kingdom, and in every part of it, from the monarch on the throne to the veſtry of a pariſh? But—"*fools ruſh in where "angels fear to tread.*" In ſuch a ſtate of unbounded power, for undefined and undefinable purpoſes, the evil of a moral and almoſt phyſical inaptitude of the man to the function muſt be the greateſt we can conceive to happen in the management of human affairs.

Having conſidered the compoſition of the third eſtate as it ſtood in its original frame, I took a view of the repreſentatives of the clergy. There too it appeared, that full as little regard was had to the general ſecurity of property, or to the aptitude of the deputies for their public purpoſes, in the principles of their election. That election was ſo contrived as to ſend a very large proportion of mere country curates to the great and arduous work of new-modelling a ſtate; men who never had ſeen the ſtate ſo much as in a picture; men who knew nothing of the world beyond the bounds of an obſcure village; who, immerſed in hopeleſs poverty, could regard all property, whether ſecular or eccleſiaſtical, with no other eye than that of envy; among whom muſt be many, who, for the ſmalleſt hope of the meaneſt dividend in plunder, would readily join in any attempts upon a body of wealth, in which they could hardly look to have any ſhare, except in a general ſcramble. Inſtead of balancing the power of the active chicaners in the other aſſembly, theſe curates muſt neceſſarily become the active coadjutors, or at beſt the paſſive inſtruments of thoſe by whom they had been habitually guided in their petty village concerns. They too could hardly be the moſt conſcientious of their kind, who, preſuming upon their incompetent underſtanding, could intrigue for a truſt which led them from their natural relation to their flocks, and their natural ſpheres of action, to undertake the regeneration of kingdoms. This

preponderating weight being added to the force of the body of chicane in the Tiers Etat, compleated that momentum of ignorance, raſhneſs, preſumption, and luſt of plunder, which nothing has been able to reſiſt.

To obſerving men it muſt have appeared from the beginning, that the majority of the Third Eſtate, in conjunction with ſuch a deputation from the clergy as I have deſcribed, whilſt it purſued the deſtruction of the nobility, would inevitably become ſubſervient to the worſt deſigns of individuals in that claſs. In the ſpoil and humiliation of their own order theſe individuals would poſſeſs a ſure fund for the pay of their new followers. To ſquander away the objects which made the happineſs of their fellows, would be to them no ſacrifice at all. Turbulent, diſcontented men of quality, in proportion as they are puffed up with perſonal pride and arrogance, generally deſpiſe their own order. One of the firſt ſymptoms they diſcover of a ſelfiſh and miſchievous ambition, is a profligate diſregard of a dignity which they partake with others. To be attached to the ſubdiviſion, to love the little platoon we belong to in ſociety, is the firſt principle (the germ as it were) of public affections. It is the firſt link in the ſeries by which we proceed towards a love to our country and to mankind. The intereſts of that portion of ſocial arrangement is a truſt in the hands of all thoſe who compoſe it; and as none but bad men would juſtify it in abuſe, none but traitors would barter it away for their own perſonal advantage.

There were, in the time of our civil troubles in England (I do not know whether you have any ſuch in your aſſembly in France) ſeveral perſons, like the then earl of Holland, who by themſelves or their families had brought an odium on the throne, by the prodigal diſpenſation of its bounties towards them, who afterwards joined in the rebellions ariſing

from the diſcontents of which they were themſelves the cauſe; men who helped to ſubvert that throne to which they owed, ſome of them, their exiſtence, others all that power which they employed to ruin their benefactor. If any bounds are ſet to the rapacious demands of that ſort of people, or that others are permitted to partake in the objects they would engroſs, revenge and envy ſoon fill up the craving void that is left in their avarice. Confounded by the complication of diſtempered paſſions, their reaſon is diſturbed; their views become vaſt and perplexed; to others inexplicable; to themſelves uncertain. They find, on all ſides, bounds to their unprincipled ambition in any fixed order of things. But in the fog and haze of confuſion all is enlarged, and appears without any limit.

When men of rank ſacrifice all ideas of dignity to an ambition without a diſtinct object, and work with low inſtruments and for low ends, the whole compoſition becomes low and baſe. Does not ſomething like this now appear in France? Does it not produce ſomething ignoble and inglorious? a kind of meanneſs in all the prevalent policy? a tendency in all that is done to lower along with individuals all the dignity and importance of the ſtate? Other revolutions have been conducted by perſons, who whilſt they attempted or effected changes in the commonwealth, ſanctified their ambition by advancing the dignity of the people whoſe peace they troubled. They had long views. They aimed at the rule, not at the deſtruction of their country. They were men of great civil, and great military talents, and if the terror, the ornament of their age. They were not like Jew brokers contending with each other who could beſt remedy with fraudulent circulation and depreciated paper the wretchedneſs and ruin brought on their country by their degenerate councils. The compliment made to one of

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the great bad men of the old ſtamp (Cromwell) by his kinſman, a favourite poet of that time, ſhews what it was he propoſed, and what indeed to a great degree he accompliſhed in the ſucceſs of his ambition:

" *Still as* you *riſe, the* ſtate, *exalted too,*
" *Finds no diſtemper whilſt 'tis chang'd by* you;
" *Chang'd like the world's great ſcene, when without noiſe*
" *The riſing ſun night's* vulgar *lights deſtroys.*"

Theſe diſturbers were not ſo much like men uſurping power, as aſſerting their natural place in ſociety. Their riſing was to illuminate and beautify the world. Their conqueſt over their competitors was by outſhining them. The hand that, like a deſtroying angel, ſmote the country, communicated to it the force and energy under which it ſuffered. I do not ſay (God forbid) I do not ſay, that the virtues of ſuch men were to be taken as a balance to their crimes; but they were ſome corrective to their effects. Such was, as I ſaid, our Cromwell. Such were your whole race of Guiſes, Condés, and Colignis. Such the Richlieus, who in more quiet times acted in the ſpirit of a civil war. Such, as better men, and in a leſs dubious cauſe, were your Henry the 4th and your Sully, though nurſed in civil confuſions, and not wholly without ſome of their taint. It is a thing to be wondered at, to ſee how very ſoon France, when ſhe had a moment to reſpire, recovered and emerged from the longeſt and moſt dreadful civil war that ever was known in any nation. Why? Becauſe, among all their maſſacres, they had not ſlain the *mind* in their country. A conſcious dignity, a noble pride, a generous ſenſe of glory and emulation, was not extinguiſhed. On the contrary, it was kindled and inflamed. The organs alſo of the ſtate, however ſhattered,

tered, exiſted. All the prizes of honour and virtue, all the rewards, all the diſtinctions, remained. But your preſent confuſion, like a palſy, has attacked the fountain of life itſelf. Every perſon in your country, in a ſituation to be actuated by a principle of honour, is diſgraced and degraded, and can entertain no ſenſation of life, except in a mortified and humiliated indignation. But this generation will quickly paſs away. The next generation of the nobility will reſemble the artificers and clowns, and money-jobbers, uſurers, and Jews, who will be always their fellows, ſometimes their maſters. Believe me, Sir, thoſe who attempt to level, never equalize. In all ſocieties, conſiſting of various deſcriptions of citizens, ſome deſcription muſt be uppermoſt. The levellers therefore only change and pervert the natural order of things; they load the edifice of ſociety, by ſetting up in the air what the ſolidity of the ſtructure requires to be on the ground. The aſſociations of taylors and carpenters, of which the republic (of Paris, for inſtance) is compoſed, cannot be equal to the ſituation, into which, by the worſt of uſurpations, an uſurpation on the prerogatives of nature, you attempt to force them.

The chancellor of France at the opening of the ſtates, ſaid, in a tone of oratorial flouriſh, that all occupations were honourable. If he meant only, that no honeſt employment was diſgraceful, he would not have gone beyond the truth. But in aſſerting, that any thing is honourable, we imply ſome diſtinction in its favour. The occupation of an hair-dreſſer, or of a working tallow-chandler, cannot be a matter of honour to any perſon—to ſay nothing of a number of other more ſervile employments. Such deſcriptions of men ought not to ſuffer oppreſſion from the ſtate; but the ſtate ſuffers oppreſſion, if ſuch as they, either individually or collectively,

lectively, are permitted to rule. In this you think you are combating prejudice, but you are at war with nature *.

I do not, my dear Sir, conceive you to be of that ſophiſtical captious ſpirit, or of that uncandid dulneſs, as to require, for every general obſervation or ſentiment, an explicit detail of the correctives and exceptions, which reaſon will preſume to be included in all the general propoſitions which come from reaſonable men. You do not imagine, that I wiſh to confine power, authority, and diſtinction to blood, and names, and titles. No, Sir. There is no qualification for government, but virtue and wiſdom, actual or preſumptive. Wherever they are actually found, they have, in whatever ſtate, condition, profeſſion or trade, the paſſport of Heaven to human place and honour. Woe to the country which would madly and impiouſly reject the ſervice of the talents and virtues, civil, military, or religious, that are given to grace and to ſerve it; and would condemn to obſcurity every thing formed to diffuſe luſtre and glory around a ſtate. Woe to that country too, that paſſing into the oppoſite extreme, conſiders a low education, a mean contracted view of things, a ſordid mercenary occupation, as a preferable title to command. Every thing ought to be open; but not indif-

* Eccleſiaſticus, chap. xxxviii. verſe 24, 25. "The wiſdom of a learned man cometh "by opportunity of leiſure: and he that hath little buſineſs ſhall become wiſe."—"How "can he get wiſdom that holdeth the plough, and that glorieth in the goad; that driveth "oxen; and is occupied in their labours; and whoſe talk is of bullocks?"

Ver. 27. "So every carpenter and work-maſter that laboureth night and day." &c.

Ver. 33. "They ſhall not be ſought for in public counſel, nor ſit high in the congre-"gation: They ſhall not ſit on the judges ſeat, nor underſtand the ſentence of judg-"ment: they cannot declare juſtice and judgment, and they ſhall not be found where "parables are ſpoken."

Ver. 34. "But they will maintain the ſtate of the world."

I do not determine whether this book be canonical, as the Gallican church (till lately) has conſidered it, or apocryphal, as here it is taken. I am ſure it contains a great deal of ſenſe, and truth.

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ferently to every man. No rotation; no appointment by lot; no mode of election operating in the ſpirit of ſortition or rotation, can be generally good in a government converſant in extenſive objects. Becauſe they have no tendency, direct or indirect, to ſelect the man with a view to the duty, or to accommodate the one to the other. I do not heſitate to ſay, that the road to eminence and power, from obſcure condition, ought not to be made too eaſy, nor a thing too much of courſe. If rare merit be the rareſt of all rare things, it ought to paſs through ſome ſort of probation. The temple of honour ought to be ſeated on an eminence. If it be open through virtue, let it be remembered too, that virtue is never tried but by ſome difficulty, and ſome ſtruggle.

Nothing is a due and adequate repreſentation of a ſtate, that does not repreſent its ability, as well as its property. But as ability is a vigorous and active principle, and as property is ſluggiſh, inert, and timid, it never can be ſafe from the invaſions of ability, unleſs it be, out of all proportion, predominant in the repreſentation. It muſt be repreſented too in great maſſes of accumulation, or it is not rightly protected. The characteriſtic eſſence of property, formed out of the combined principles of its acquiſition and conſervation, is to be *unequal*. The great maſſes therefore which excite envy, and tempt rapacity, muſt be put out of the poſſibility of danger. Then they form a natural rampart about the leſſer properties in all their gradations. The ſame quantity of property, which is by the natural courſe of things divided among many, has not the ſame operation. Its defenſive power is weakened as it is diffuſed. In this diffuſion each man's portion is leſs than what, in the eagerneſs of his deſires, he may flatter himſelf to obtain by diſſipating the accumulations of others. The plunder of the few would indeed give but a ſhare inconceivably ſmall in the diſtribu-

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tion to the many. But the many are not capable of making this calculation; and thoſe who lead them to rapine, never intend this diſtribution.

The power of perpetuating our property in our families is one of the moſt valuable and intereſting circumſtances belonging to it, and that which tends the moſt to the perpetuation of ſociety itſelf. It makes our weakneſs ſubſervient to our virtue; it grafts benevolence even upon avarice. The poſſeſſors of family wealth, and of the diſtinction which attends hereditary poſſeſſion (as moſt concerned in it) are the natural ſecurities for this tranſmiſſion. With us, the houſe of peers is formed upon this principle. It is wholly compoſed of hereditary property and hereditary diſtinction; and made therefore the third of the legiſlature; and in the laſt event, the ſole judge of all property in all its ſubdiviſions. The houſe of commons too, though not neceſſarily, yet in fact, is always ſo compoſed in the far greater part. Let thoſe large proprietors be what they will, and they have their chance of being amongſt the beſt, they are at the very worſt, the ballaſt in the veſſel of the commonwealth. For though hereditary wealth, and the rank which goes with it, are too much idolized by creeping ſycophants, and the blind abject admirers of power, they are too raſhly ſlighted in ſhallow ſpeculations of the petulant, aſſuming, ſhort-ſighted coxcombs of philoſophy. Some decent regulated pre-eminence, ſome preference (not excluſive appropriation) given to birth, is neither unnatural, nor unjuſt, nor impolitic.

It is ſaid, that twenty-four millions ought to prevail over two hundred thouſand. True; if the conſtitution of a kingdom be a problem of arithmetic. This ſort of diſcourſe does well enough with the lamp-poſt for its ſecond: to men who *may* reaſon calmly, it is ridiculous. The will of the many, and their intereſt, muſt very often differ; and great

will be the difference when they make an evil choice. A government of five hundred country attornies and obſcure curates is not good for twenty-four millions of men, though it were choſen by eight and forty millions; nor is it the better for being guided by a dozen of perſons of quality, who have betrayed their truſt in order to obtain that power. At preſent, you ſeem in every thing to have ſtrayed out of the high road of nature. The property of France does not govern it. Of courſe property is deſtroyed, and rational liberty has no exiſtence. All you have got for the preſent is a paper circulation, and a ſtock-jobbing conſtitution: and as to the future, do you ſeriouſly think that the territory of France, upon the republican ſyſtem of eighty-three independent municipalities (to ſay nothing of the parts that compoſe them) can ever be governed as one body, or can ever be ſet in motion by the impulſe of one mind? When the national aſſembly has completed its work, it will have accompliſhed its ruin. Theſe commonwealths will not long bear a ſtate of ſubjection to the republic of Paris. They will not bear that this one body ſhould monopolize the captivity of the king, and the dominion over the aſſembly calling itſelf national. Each will keep its own portion of the ſpoil of the church to itſelf; and it will not ſuffer either that ſpoil, or the more juſt fruits of their induſtry, or the natural produce of their ſoil, to be ſent to ſwell the inſolence, or pamper the luxury of the mechanics of Paris. In this they will ſee none of the equality, under the pretence of which they have been tempted to throw off their allegiance to their ſovereign, as well as the antient conſtitution of their country. There can be no capital city in ſuch a conſtitution as they have lately made. They have forgot, that when they framed democratic governments, they had virtually diſmembered their country. The perſon whom they perſevere in calling king,

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has not power left to him by the hundredth part ſufficient to hold together this collection of republics. The republic of Paris will endeavour indeed to compleat the debauchery of the army, and illegally to perpetuate the aſſembly, without reſort to its conſtituents, as the means of continuing its deſpotiſm. It will make efforts, by becoming the heart of a boundleſs paper circulation, to draw every thing to itſelf; but in vain. All this policy in the end will appear as feeble as it is now violent.

If this be your actual ſituation, compared to the ſituation to which you were called, as it were by the voice of God and man, I cannot find it in my heart to congratulate you on the choice you have made, or the ſucceſs which has attended your endeavours. I can as little recommend to any other nation a conduct grounded on ſuch principles, and productive of ſuch effects. That I muſt leave to thoſe who can ſee further into your affairs than I am able to do, and who beſt know how far your actions are favourable to their deſigns. The gentlemen of the revolution ſociety, who were ſo early in their congratulations, appear to be ſtrongly of opinion that there is ſome ſcheme of politics relative to this country, in which your proceedings may, in ſome way, be uſeful. For your Dr. Price, who ſeems to have ſpeculated himſelf into no ſmall degree of fervour upon this ſubject, addreſſes his auditory in the following very remarkable words: "I cannot "conclude without recalling *particularly* to your recollection "a conſideration which I have *more than once alluded to*, and "which probably your thoughts have *been all along anticipa-* "*ting*; a conſideration with which my *mind is impreſſed more* "*than I can expreſs*. I mean the conſideration of the *fa-* "*vourableneſs of the preſent times to all exertions in the cauſe* "*of liberty*."

It is plain that the mind of this *political* preacher was at

the time big with ſome extraordinary deſign; and it is very probable, that the thoughts of his audience, who underſtood him better than I do, did all along run before him in his reflection, and in the whole train of conſequences to which it led.

Before I read that ſermon, I really thought I had lived in a free country; and it was an error I cheriſhed, becauſe it gave me a greater liking to the country I lived in. I was indeed aware, that a jealous, ever-waking vigilance, to guard the treaſure of our liberty, not only from invaſion, but from decay and corruption, was our beſt wiſdom and our firſt duty. However, I conſidered that treaſure rather as a poſſeſſion to be ſecured than as a prize to be contended for. I did not diſcern how the preſent time came to be ſo very favourable to all *exertions* in the cauſe of freedom. The preſent time differs from any other only by the circumſtance of what is doing in France. If the example of that nation is to have an influence on this, I can eaſily conceive why ſome of their proceedings which have an unpleaſant aſpect, and are not quite reconcileable to humanity, generoſity, good faith, and juſtice, are palliated with ſo much milky good-nature towards the actors, and borne with ſo much heroic fortitude towards the ſufferers. It is certainly not prudent to diſcredit the authority of an example we mean to follow. But allowing this, we are led to a very natural queſtion;—What is that cauſe of liberty, and what are thoſe exertions in its favour, to which the example of France is ſo ſingularly auſpicious? Is our monarchy to be annihilated, with all the laws, all the tribunals, and all the antient corporations of the kingdom? Is every land-mark of the country to be done away in favour of a geometrical and arithmetical conſtitution? Is the houſe of lords to be voted uſeleſs? Is epiſcopacy to be aboliſhed? Are the church lands to be ſold to Jews and jobbers; or given

given to bribe new-invented municipal republics into a participation in ſacrilege? Are all the taxes to be voted grievances, and the revenue reduced to a patriotic contribution, or patriotic preſents? Are ſilver ſhoe-buckles to be ſubſtituted in the place of the land tax and the malt tax, for the ſupport of the naval ſtrength of this kingdom? Are all orders, ranks, and diſtinctions to be confounded, that out of univerſal anarchy, joined to national bankruptcy, three or four thouſand democracies ſhould be formed into eighty-three, and that they may all, by ſome ſort of unknown attractive power, be organized into one? For this great end, is the army to be ſeduced from its diſcipline and its fidelity, firſt by every kind of debauchery, and then by the terrible precedent of a donative in the encreaſe of pay? Are the curates to be ſeduced from their biſhops, by holding out to them the deluſive hope of a dole out of the ſpoils of their own order? Are the citizens of London to be drawn from their allegiance, by feeding them at the expence of their fellow-ſubjects? Is a compulſory paper currency to be ſubſtituted in the place of the legal coin of this kingdom? Is what remains of the plundered ſtock of public revenue to be employed in the wild project of maintaining two armies to watch over and to fight with each other?—If theſe are the ends and means of the revolution ſociety, I admit they are well aſſorted; and France may furniſh them for both with precedents in point.

I ſee that your example is held out to ſhame us. I know that we are ſuppoſed a dull ſluggiſh race, rendered paſſive by finding our ſituation tolerable; and prevented by a mediocrity of freedom from ever attaining to its full perfection. Your leaders in France began by affecting to admire, almoſt to adore, the Britiſh conſtitution; but as they advanced they came to look upon it with a ſovereign contempt. The friends

of

of your national aſſembly amongſt us have full as mean an opinion of what was formerly thought the glory of their country. The revolution ſociety has diſcovered that the Engliſh nation is not free. They are convinced that the inequality in our repreſentation is a "defect in our conſtitution "ſo *groſs and palpable*, as to make it excellent chiefly in "*form* and *theory**." That a repreſentation in the legiſlature of a kingdom is not only the baſis of all conſtitutional liberty in it, but of "*all legitimate government*; that without "it a *government* is nothing but an *uſurpation*;"—that "when "the repreſentation is *partial*, the kingdom poſſeſſes liberty "only *partially*; and if extremely partial, it gives only a "*ſemblance*; and if not only extremely partial, but corruptly "choſen, it becomes a *nuiſance*." Dr. Price conſiders this inadequacy of repreſentation as our *fundamental grievance*; and though, as to the corruption of this ſemblance of repreſentation, he hopes it is not yet arrived to its full perfection of depravity; he fears that "nothing will be done towards "gaining for us this *eſſential bleſſing*, until ſome *great abuſe* "*of power* again provokes our reſentment, or ſome *great ca*-"*lamity* again alarms our fears, or perhaps till the acquiſition "of a *pure and equal repreſentation by other countries*, whilſt "we are *mocked* with the *ſhadow*, kindles our ſhame." To this he ſubjoins a note in theſe words. "A repreſentation, "choſen chiefly by the treaſury, and a *few* thouſands of "the *dregs* of the people, who are generally paid for their "votes."

You will ſmile here at the conſiſtency of thoſe democratiſts, who, when they are not on their guard, treat the humbler part of the community with the greateſt contempt, whilſt, at the ſame time, they pretend to make them the depoſitories of all power. It would require a long diſcourſe to

* Diſcourſe on the Love of our Country, 3d edit. p. 39.

point out to you the many fallacies that lurk in the generality and equivocal nature of the terms "inadequate repreſentation." I ſhall only ſay here, in juſtice to that old-faſhioned conſtitution, under which we have long proſpered, that our repreſentation has been found perfectly adequate to all the purpoſes for which a repreſentation of the people can be deſired or deviſed. I defy the enemies of our conſtitution to ſhew the contrary. To detail the particulars in which it is found ſo well to promote its ends, would demand a treatiſe on our practical conſtitution. I ſtate here the doctrine of the revolutioniſts, only that you and others may ſee, what an opinion theſe gentlemen entertain of the conſtitution of their country, and why they ſeem to think that ſome great abuſe of power, or ſome great calamity, as giving a chance for the bleſſing of a conſtitution according to their ideas, would be much palliated to their feelings; you ſee *why they* are ſo much enamoured of your fair and equal repreſentation, which being once obtained, the ſame effects might follow. You ſee they conſider our houſe of commons as only "a ſemblance," "a form," "a theory," "a ſhadow," "a mockery," perhaps "a nuiſance."

Theſe gentlemen value themſelves on being ſyſtematic; and not without reaſon. They muſt therefore look on this groſs and palpable defect of repreſentation, this fundamental grievance (ſo they call it) as a thing not only vicious in itſelf, but as rendering our whole government abſolutely *illegitimate*, and not at all better than a downright *uſurpation*. Another revolution, to get rid of this illegitimate and uſurped government, would of courſe be perfectly juſtifiable, if not abſolutely neceſſary. Indeed their principle, if you obſerve it with any attention, goes much further than to an alteration in the election of the houſe of commons; for, if popular repreſentation, or choice, is neceſſary to the *legiti-*

macy

macy of all government, the houſe of lords is, at one ſtroke, baſtardized and corrupted in blood. That houſe is no repreſentative of the people at all, even in "ſemblance or in form." The caſe of the crown is altogether as bad. In vain the crown may endeavour to ſcreen itſelf againſt theſe gentlemen by the authority of the eſtabliſhment made on the revolution. The revolution which is reſorted to for a title, on their ſyſtem, wants a title itſelf. The revolution is built, according to their theory, upon a baſis not more ſolid than our preſent formalities, as it was made by an houſe of lords not repreſenting any one but themſelves; and by an houſe of commons exactly ſuch as the preſent, that is, as they term it, by a mere "ſhadow and mockery" of repreſentation.

Something they muſt deſtroy, or they ſeem to themſelves to exiſt for no purpoſe. One ſet is for deſtroying the civil power through the eccleſiaſtical; another for demoliſhing the eccleſiaſtick through the civil. They are aware that the worſt conſequences might happen to the public in accompliſhing this double ruin of church and ſtate; but they are ſo heated with their theories, that they give more than hints, that this ruin, with all the miſchiefs that muſt lead to it and attend it, and which to themſelves appear quite certain, would not be unacceptable to them, or very remote from their wiſhes. A man amongſt them of great authority, and certainly of great talents, ſpeaking of a ſuppoſed alliance between church and ſtate, ſays, "perhaps *we muſt* "*wait for the fall of the civil powers* before this moſt unna-"tural alliance be broken. Calamitous no doubt will that "time be. But what convulſion in the political world "ought to be a ſubject of lamentation, if it be attended "with ſo deſirable an effect?" You ſee with what a ſteady eye theſe gentlemen are prepared to view the greateſt calamities which can befall their country!

It

It is no wonder therefore, that with theſe ideas of every thing in their conſtitution and government at home, either in church or ſtate, as illegitimate and uſurped, or, at beſt as a vain mockery, they look abroad with an eager and paſſionate enthuſiaſm. Whilſt they are poſſeſſed by theſe notions, it is vain to talk to them of the practice of their anceſtors, the fundamental laws of their country, the fixed form of a conſtitution, whoſe merits are confirmed by the ſolid teſt of long experience, and an increaſing public ſtrength and national proſperity. They deſpiſe experience as the wiſdom of unlettered men; and as for the reſt, they have wrought under-ground a mine that will blow up at one grand exploſion all examples of antiquity, all precedents, charters, and acts of parliament. They have "the rights of "men." Againſt theſe there can be no preſcription; againſt theſe no agreement is binding: theſe admit no temperament, and no compromiſe: any thing withheld from their full demand is ſo much of fraud and injuſtice. Againſt theſe their rights of men let no government look for ſecurity in the length of its continuance, or in the juſtice and lenity of its adminiſtration. The objections of theſe ſpeculatiſts, if its forms do not quadrate with their theories, are as valid againſt ſuch an old and beneficent government as againſt the moſt violent tyranny, or the greeneſt uſurpation. They are always at iſſue with governments, not on a queſtion of abuſe, but a queſtion of competency, and a queſtion of title. I have nothing to ſay to the clumſy ſubtilty of their political metaphyſics. Let them be their amuſement in the ſchools. —"Illa *ſe jactet in aula—Æolus, et clauſo ventorum carcere regnet.*"—But let them not break priſon to burſt like a *Levanter*, to ſweep the earth with their hurricane, and to break up the fountains of the great deep to overwhelm us.

Far am I from denying in theory; full as far is my heart

from withholding in practice (if I were of power to give or to withhold) the *real* rights of men. In denying their falſe claims of right, I do not mean to injure thoſe which are real, and are ſuch as their pretended rights would totally deſtroy. If civil ſociety be made for the advantage of man, all the advantages for which it is made become his right. It is an inſtitution of beneficence; and law itſelf is only beneficence acting by a rule. Men have a right to live by that rule; they have a right to juſtice; as between their fellows, whether their fellows are in politic function or in ordinary occupation. They have a right to the fruits of their induſtry; and to the means of making their induſtry fruitful. They have a right to the acquiſitions of their parents; to the nouriſhment and improvement of their offſpring; to inſtruction in life, and to conſolation in death. Whatever each man can ſeparately do, without treſpaſſing upon others, he has a right to do for himſelf; and he has a right to a fair portion of all which ſociety, with all its combinations of ſkill and force, can do in his favour. In this partnerſhip all men have equal rights; but not to equal things. He that has but five ſhillings in the partnerſhip, has as good a right to it, as he that has five hundred pound has to his larger proportion. But he has not a right to an equal dividend in the product of the joint ſtock; and as to the ſhare of power, authority, and direction which each individual ought to have in the management of the ſtate, that I muſt deny to be amongſt the direct original rights of man in civil ſociety; for I have in my contemplation the civil ſocial man, and no other. It is a thing to be ſettled by convention.

If civil ſociety be the offſpring of convention, that convention muſt be its law. That convention muſt limit and modify all the deſcriptions of conſtitution which are formed under it. Every ſort of legiſlative, judicial, or executory

power are its creatures. They can have no being in any other ſtate of things; and how can any man claim, under the conventions of civil ſociety, rights which do not ſo much as ſuppoſe its exiſtence? Rights which are abſolutely repugnant to it? One of the firſt motives to civil ſociety, and which becomes one of its fundamental rules, is, *that no man ſhould be judge in his own cauſe.* By this each perſon has at once diveſted himſelf of the firſt fundamental right of uncovenanted man, that is, to judge for himſelf, and to aſſert his own cauſe. He abdicates all right to be his own governor. He inclufively, in a great meaſure, abandons the right of ſelf-defence, the firſt law of nature. Men cannot enjoy the rights of an uncivil and of a civil ſtate together. That he may obtain juſtice, he gives up his right of determining what it is in points the moſt eſſential to him. That he may ſecure ſome liberty, he makes a ſurrender in truſt of the whole of it.

Government is not made in virtue of natural rights, which may and do exiſt in total independence of it; and exiſt in much greater clearneſs, and in a much greater degree of abſtract perfection: but their abſtract perfection is their practical defect. By having a right to every thing they want every thing. Government is a contrivance of human wiſdom to provide for human *wants.* Men have a right that theſe wants ſhould be provided for by this wiſdom. Among theſe wants is to be reckoned the want, out of civil ſociety, of a ſufficient reſtraint upon their paſſions. Society requires not only that the paſſions of individuals ſhould be ſubjected, but that even in the maſs and body as well as in the individuals, the inclinations of men ſhould frequently be thwarted, their will controlled, and their paſſions brought into ſubjection. This can only be done *by a power out of themſelves*; and not, in the exerciſe

of its function, ſubject to that will and to thoſe paſſions which it is its office to bridle and ſubdue. In this ſenſe the reſtraints on men, as well as their liberties, are to be reckoned among their rights. But as the liberties and the reſtrictions vary with times and circumſtances, and admit of infinite modifications, they cannot be ſettled upon any abſtract rule; and nothing is ſo fooliſh as to diſcuſs them upon that principle.

The moment you abate any thing from the full rights of men, each to govern himſelf, and ſuffer any artificial poſitive limitation upon thoſe rights, from that moment the whole organization of government becomes a conſideration of convenience. This it is which makes the conſtitution of a ſtate, and the due diſtribution of its powers, a matter of the moſt delicate and complicated ſkill. It requires a deep knowledge of human nature and human neceſſities, and of the things which facilitate or obſtruct the various ends which are to be purſued by the mechaniſm of civil inſtitutions. The ſtate is to have recruits to its ſtrength, and remedies to its diſtempers. What is the uſe of diſcuſſing a man's abſtract right to food or to medicine? The queſtion is upon the method of procuring and adminiſtering them. In that deliberation I ſhall always adviſe to call in the aid of the farmer and the phyſician, rather than the profeſſor of metaphyſics.

The ſcience of conſtructing a commonwealth, or renovating it, or reforming it, is, like every other experimental ſcience, not to be taught *à priori*. Nor is it a ſhort experience that can inſtruct us in that practical ſcience; becauſe the real effects of moral cauſes are not always immediate; but that which in the firſt inſtance is prejudicial may be excellent in its remoter operation; and its excellence may ariſe even from the ill effects it produces in the beginning.

The

The reverſe alſo happens; and very plauſible ſchemes, with very pleaſing commencements, have often ſhameful and lamentable concluſions. In ſtates there are often ſome obſcure and almoſt latent cauſes, things which appear at firſt view of little moment, on which a very great part of its proſperity or adverſity may moſt eſſentially depend. The ſcience of government being therefore ſo practical in itſelf, and intended for ſuch practical purpoſes, a matter which requires experience, and even more experience than any perſon can gain in his whole life, however ſagacious and obſerving he may be, it is with infinite caution that any man ought to venture upon pulling down an edifice which has anſwered in any tolerable degree for ages the common purpoſes of ſociety, or on building it up again, without having models and patterns of approved utility before his eyes.

Theſe metaphyſic rights entering into common life, like rays of light which pierce into a denſe medium, are, by the laws of nature, refracted from their ſtraight line. Indeed in the groſs and complicated maſs of human paſſions and concerns, the primitive rights of men undergo ſuch a variety of refractions and reflections, that it becomes abſurd to talk of them as if they continued in the ſimplicity of their original direction. The nature of man is intricate; the objects of ſociety are of the greateſt poſſible complexity; and therefore no ſimple diſpoſition or direction of power can be ſuitable either to man's nature, or to the quality of his affairs. When I hear the ſimplicity of contrivance aimed at and boaſted of in any new political conſtitutions, I am at no loſs to decide that the artificers are groſsly ignorant of their trade, or totally negligent of their duty. The ſimple governments are fundamentally defective, to ſay no worſe of them. If you were to contemplate ſociety in but one point of view, all theſe ſimple modes of polity are infinitely captivating. In

effect each would anſwer its ſingle end much more perfectly than the more complex is able to attain all its complex purpoſes. But it is better that the whole ſhould be imperfectly and anomalouſly anſwered, than that, while ſome parts are provided for with great exactneſs, others might be totally neglected, or perhaps materially injured, by the over-care of a favourite member.

The pretended rights of theſe theoriſts are all extremes; and in proportion as they are metaphyſically true, they are morally and politically falſe. The rights of men are in a ſort of *middle*, incapable of definition, but not impoſſible to be diſcerned. The rights of men in governments are their advantages; and theſe are often in balances between differences of good; in compromiſes ſometimes been good and evil, and ſometimes, between evil and evil. Political reaſon is a computing principle; adding, ſubtracting, multiplying, and dividing, morally and not metaphyſically or mathematically, true moral denominations.

By theſe theoriſts the right of the people is almoſt always ſophiſtically confounded with their power. The body of the community, whenever it can come to act, can meet with no effectual reſiſtance; but till power and right are the ſame, the whole body of them has no right inconſiſtent with virtue, and the firſt of all virtues, prudence. Men have no right to what is not reaſonable, and to what is not for their benefit; for though a pleaſant writer ſaid, *Liceat perire poetis*, when one of them, in cold blood, is ſaid to have leaped into the flames of a volcanic revolution, *Ardentem frigidus Ætnam inſiluit*, I conſider ſuch a frolic rather as an unjuſtifiable poetic licence, than as one of the franchiſes of Parnaſſus; and whether he were poet or divine, or politician that choſe to exerciſe this kind of right, I think that more wiſe, becauſe more charitable thoughts would urge me rather

rather to ſave the man, than to preſerve his brazen ſlippers as the monuments of his folly.

The kind of anniverſary ſermons, to which a great part of what I write refers, if men are not ſhamed out of their preſent courſe, in commemorating the fact, will cheat many out of the principles, and deprive them of the benefits of the revolution they commemorate. I confeſs to you, Sir, I never liked this continual talk of reſiſtance and revolution, or the practice of making the extreme medicine of the conſtitution its daily bread. It renders the habit of ſociety dangerouſly valetudinary: it is taking periodical doſes of mercury ſublimate, and ſwallowing down repeated provocatives of cantharides to our love of liberty.

This diſtemper of remedy, grown habitual, relaxes and wears out, by a vulgar and proſtituted uſe, the ſpring of that ſpirit which is to be exerted on great occaſions. It was in the moſt patient period of Roman ſervitude that themes of tyrannicide made the ordinary exerciſe of boys at ſchool—*cum perimit ſævos claſſis numeroſa tyrannos.* In the ordinary ſtate of things, it produces in a country like ours the worſt effects, even on the cauſe of that liberty which it abuſes with the diſſoluteneſs of an extravagant ſpeculation. Almoſt all the high-bred republicans of my time have, after a ſhort ſpace, become the moſt decided, thorough-paced courtiers; they ſoon left the buſineſs of a tedious, moderate, but practical reſiſtance to thoſe of us whom, in the pride and intoxication of their theories, they have ſlighted, as not much better than tories. Hypocriſy, of courſe, delights in the moſt ſublime ſpeculations; for, never intending to go beyond ſpeculation, it coſts nothing to have it magnificent. But even in caſes where rather levity than fraud was to be ſuſpected in theſe ranting ſpeculations, the iſſue has been much the ſame. Theſe profeſſors, finding their extreme

principles

principles not applicable to caſes which call only for a qualified, or, as I may ſay, civil and legal reſiſtance; in ſuch caſes employ no reſiſtance at all. It is with them a war or a revolution, or it is nothing. Finding their ſchemes of politics not adapted to the ſtate of the world in which they live, they often come to think lightly of all public principle; and are ready, on their part, to abandon for a very trivial intereſt what they find of very trivial value. Some indeed are of more ſteady and perſevering natures; but theſe are eager politicians out of parliament, who have little to tempt them to abandon their favourite projects. They have ſome change in the church or ſtate, or both, conſtantly in their view. When that is the caſe, they are always bad citizens, and perfectly unſure connexions. For, conſidering their ſpeculative deſigns as of infinite value, and the actual arrangement of the ſtate as of no eſtimation, they are at beſt indifferent about it. They ſee no merit in the good, and no fault in the vicious management of public affairs; they rather rejoice in the latter, as more propitious to revolution. They ſee no merit or demerit in any man, or any action, or any political principle, any further than as they may forward or retard their deſign of change: they therefore take up, one day, the moſt violent and ſtretched prerogative, and another time the wildeſt democratic ideas of freedom, and paſs from the one to the other without any ſort of regard to cauſe, to perſon, or to party.

In France you are now in the criſis of a revolution, and in the tranſit from one form of government to another—you cannot ſee that character of men exactly in the ſame ſituation in which we ſee it in this country. With us it is militant; with you it is triumphant; and you know how it can act when its power is commenſurate to its will. I would not be ſuppoſed to confine thoſe obſervations to any deſcription of men,

men, or to comprehend all men of any deſcription within them—No! far from it. I am as incapable of that injuſtice, as I am of keeping terms with thoſe who profeſs principles of extremes; and who under the name of religion teach little elſe than wild and dangerous politics. The worſt of theſe politics of revolution is this; they temper and harden the breaſt, in order to prepare it for the deſperate ſtrokes which are ſometimes uſed in extreme occaſions. But as theſe occaſions may never arrive, the mind receives a gratuitous taint; and the moral ſentiments ſuffer not a little, when no political purpoſe is ſerved by the depravation. This ſort of people are ſo taken up with their theories about the rights of man, that they have totally forgot his nature. Without opening one new avenue to the underſtanding, they have ſucceeded in ſtopping up thoſe that lead to the heart. They have perverted in themſelves, and in thoſe that attend to them, all the well-placed ſympathies of the human breaſt.

This famous ſermon of the Old Jewry breathes nothing but this ſpirit through all the political part. Plots, maſſacres, aſſaſſinations, ſeem to ſome people a trivial price for obtaining a revolution. A cheap, bloodleſs reformation, a guiltleſs liberty, appear flat and vapid to their taſte. There muſt be a great change of ſcene; there muſt be a magnificent ſtage effect; there muſt be a grand ſpectacle to rouze the imagination, grown torpid with the lazy enjoyment of ſixty years ſecurity, and the ſtill unanimating repoſe of public proſperity. The preacher found them all in the French revolution. This inſpires a juvenile warmth through his whole frame. His enthuſiaſm kindles as he advances; and when he arrives at his peroration, it is in a full blaze. Then viewing, from the Piſgah of his pulpit, the free, moral, happy, flouriſhing, and glorious ſtate of France, as in a bird-

eye landſcape of a promiſed land, he breaks out into the following rapture:

"What an eventful period is this! I am *thankful* that I "have lived to it; I could almoſt ſay, *Lord, now letteſt thou* "*thy ſervant depart in peace, for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſal-* "*vation.*—I have lived to ſee a *diffuſion* of knowledge, which "has undermined ſuperſtition and error.—I have lived to "ſee *the rights of men* better underſtood than ever; and na- "tions panting for liberty which ſeemed to have loſt the "idea of it.—I have lived to ſee *thirty millions of people*, in- "dignant and reſolute, ſpurning at ſlavery, and demanding "liberty with an irreſiſtible voice. *Their king led in triumph,* "*and an arbitrary monarch ſurrendering himſelf to his* "*ſubjects* *."

Before I proceed further, I have to remark, that Dr. Price ſeems rather to overvalue the great acquiſitions of light which he has obtained and diffuſed in this age. The laſt century appears to me to have been quite as much enlightened. It had, though in a different place, a triumph as memorable as that of Dr. Price; and ſome of the great preachers of that period partook of it as eagerly as he has done in the triumph of France. On the trial of the Rev. Hugh Peters for high treaſon, it was depoſed, that when King Charles was brought to London for his trial, the Apoſtle of Liberty in that day conducted the *triumph*. "I "ſaw," ſays the witneſs, "his majeſty in the coach with ſix "horſes, and Peters riding before the king *triumphing*."

* Another of theſe reverend gentlemen, who was witneſs to ſome of the ſpectacles which Paris has lately exhibited—expreſſes himſelf thus, "*A king dragged in ſubmiſſive triumph by* "*his conquering ſubjects* is one of thoſe appearances of grandeur which ſeldom riſe in the "proſpect of human affairs, and which, during the remainder of my life, I ſhall think of "with wonder and gratification." Theſe gentlemen agree marvellouſly in their feelings.

Dr.

Dr. Price, when he talks as if he had made a diſcovery, only follows a precedent; for, after the commencement of the king's trial, this precurſor, the ſame Dr. Peters, concluding a long prayer at the royal chapel at Whitehall, (he had very triumphantly choſen his place) ſaid, "I have prayed and "preached theſe twenty years; and now I may ſay with "old Simeon, *Lord, now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in "peace, for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation* *." Peters had not the fruits of his prayer; for he neither departed ſo ſoon as he wiſhed, nor in peace. He became (what I heartily hope none of his followers may be in this country) himſelf a ſacrifice to the triumph which he led as pontiff. They dealt at the reſtoration, perhaps, too hardly with this poor good man. But we owe it to his memory and his ſufferings, that he had as much illumination, and as much zeal, and had as effectually undermined all *the ſuperſtition and error* which might impede the great buſineſs he was engaged in, as any who follow and repeat after him, in this age, which would aſſume to itſelf an excluſive title to the knowledge of the rights of men, and all the glorious conſequences of that knowledge.

After this ſally of the preacher of the Old Jewry, which differs only in place and time, but agrees perfectly with the ſpirit and letter of the rapture of 1648, the revolution ſociety, the fabricators of governments, the heroic band of *caſhierers of monarchs*, electors of ſovereigns, and leaders of kings in triumph, ſtrutting with a proud conſciouſneſs of the diffuſion of knowledge, of which every member had obtained ſo large a ſhare in the donative, were in haſte to make a generous diffuſion of the knowledge they had thus gratuitouſly received. To make this bountiful communication, they adjourned from the church in the Old Jewry, to the London

* State Trials, vol. ii. p. 360, p. 363.

Tavern; where the ſame Dr. Price, in whom the fumes of his oracular tripod were not entirely evaporated, moved and carried the reſolution, or addreſs of congratulation, tranſmitted by Lord Stanhope to the national aſſembly of France.

I find a preacher of the goſpel profaning the beautiful and prophetic ejaculation, commonly called "*nunc dimittis*," made on the firſt preſentation of our Saviour in the temple, and applying it, with an inhuman and unnatural rapture, to the moſt horrid, atrocious, and afflicting ſpectacle, that perhaps ever was exhibited to the pity and indignation of mankind. This "*leading in triumph*," a thing in its beſt form unmanly and irreligious, which fills our preacher with ſuch unhallowed tranſports, muſt ſhock, I believe, the moral taſte of every well-born mind. Several Engliſh were the ſtupified and indignant ſpectators of that triumph. It was (unleſs we have been ſtrangely deceived) a ſpectacle more reſembling a proceſſion of American ſavages, entering into Onondaga, after ſome of their murders called victories, and leading into hovels hung round with ſcalps, their captives, overpowered with the ſcoffs and buffets of women as ferocious as themſelves, much more than it reſembled the triumphal pomp of a civilized martial nation;—if a civilized nation, or any men who had a ſenſe of generoſity, were capable of a perſonal triumph over the fallen and afflicted.

This, my dear Sir, was not the triumph of France. I muſt believe that, as a nation, it overwhelmed you with ſhame and horror. I muſt believe that the national aſſembly find themſelves in a ſtate of the greateſt humiliation, in not being able to puniſh the authors of this triumph, or the actors in it; and that they are in a ſituation in which any enquiry they may make upon the ſubject, muſt be deſtitute even of the

the appearance of liberty or impartiality. The apology of that aſſembly is found in their ſituation; but when we approve what they *muſt* bear, it is in us the degenerate choice of a vitiated mind.

With a compelled appearance of deliberation, they vote under the dominion of a ſtern neceſſity. They ſit in the heart, as it were, of a foreign republic: they have their reſidence in a city whoſe conſtitution has emanated neither from the charter of their king, nor from their legiſlative power. There they are ſurrounded by an army not raiſed either by the authority of their crown, or by their command; and which, if they ſhould order to diſſolve itſelf, would inſtantly diſſolve them. There they ſit, after a gang of aſſaſſins had driven away ſome hundreds of the members; whilſt thoſe who held the ſame moderate principles, with more patience or better hope, continued every day expoſed to outrageous inſults and murderous threats. There a majority, ſometimes real, ſometimes pretended, captive itſelf, compels a captive king to iſſue as royal edicts, at third hand, the polluted nonſenſe of their moſt licentious and giddy coffee-houſes. It is notorious, that all their meaſures are decided before they are debated. It is beyond doubt, that under the terror of the bayonet, and the lamp-poſt, and the torch to their houſes, they are obliged to adopt all the crude and deſperate meaſures ſuggeſted by clubs compoſed of a monſtrous medley of all conditions, tongues, and nations. Among theſe are found perſons, in compariſon of whom Catiline would be thought ſcrupulous, and Cethegus a man of ſobriety and moderation. Nor is it in theſe clubs alone that the publick meaſures are deformed into monſters. They undergo a previous diſtortion in academies, intended as ſo many ſeminaries for theſe clubs, which are ſet up in all the places of publick reſort. In theſe meetings of all ſorts, every counſel, in proportion as it

is

audacity, and violent, and perfidious, is taken for the mark of ſuperior genius. Humanity and compaſſion are ridiculed as the fruits of ſuperſtition and ignorance. Tenderneſs to individuals is conſidered as treaſon to the public. Liberty is always to be eſtimated perfect as property is rendered inſecure. Amidſt aſſaſſination, maſſacre, and confiſcation, perpetrated or meditated, they are forming plans for the good order of future ſociety. Embracing in their arms the carcaſes of baſe criminals, and promoting their relations on the title of their offences, they drive hundreds of virtuous perſons to the ſame end, by forcing them to ſubſiſt by beggary or by crime.

The aſſembly, their organ, acts before them the farce of deliberation with as little decency as liberty. They act like the comedians of a fair before a riotous audience; they act amidſt the tumultuous cries of a mixed mob of ferocious men, and of women loſt to ſhame, who, according to their inſolent fancies, direct, control, applaud, explode them; and ſometimes mix and take their ſeats amongſt them; domineering over them with a ſtrange mixture of ſervile petulance and proud preſumptuous authority. As they have inverted order in all things, the gallery is in the place of the houſe. This aſſembly, which overthrows kings and kingdoms, has not even the phyſiognomy and aſpect of a grave legiſlative body—*nec color imperii, nec frons erat ulla ſenatus.* They have a power given to them, like that of the evil principle, to ſubvert and deſtroy; but none to conſtruct, except ſuch machines as may be fitted for further ſubverſion and further deſtruction.

Who is it that admires, and from the heart is attached to national repreſentative aſſemblies, but muſt turn with horror and diſguſt from ſuch a profane burleſque, and abominable perverſion of that ſacred inſtitute? Lovers of monarchy,

lovers

lovers of republicks, muſt alike abhor it. The members of your aſſembly muſt themſelves groan under the tyranny of which they have all the ſhame, none of the direction, and little of the profit. I am ſure many of the members who compoſe even the majority of that body, muſt feel as I do, notwithſtanding the applauſes of the revolution ſociety.—Miſerable king! miſerable aſſembly! How muſt that aſſembly be ſilently ſcandalized with thoſe of their members, who could call a day which ſeemed to blot the ſun out of heaven, "un beau jour*!" How muſt they be inwardly indignant at hearing others, who thought fit to declare to them, "that "the veſſel of the ſtate would fly forward in her courſe to-"wards regeneration with more ſpeed than ever," from the ſtiff gale of treaſon and murder, which preceded our preacher's triumph! What muſt they have felt, whilſt with outward patience and inward indignation they heard of the ſlaughter of innocent gentlemen in their houſes, that "the "blood ſpilled was not the moſt pure?" What muſt they have felt, when they were beſieged by complaints of diſorders which ſhook their country to its foundations, at being compelled coolly to tell the complainants, that they were under the protection of the law, and that they would addreſs the king (the captive king) to cauſe the laws to be enforced for their protection; when the enſlaved miniſters of that captive king had formally notified to them, that there were neither law, nor authority, nor power left to protect? What muſt they have felt at being obliged, as a felicitation on the preſent new year, to requeſt their captive king to forget the ſtormy period of the laſt, on account of the great good which *he* was likely to produce to his people; to the complete attainment of which good they adjourned the practical demonſtrations of their loyalty, aſſuring him of their obedi-

* 6th of October, 1789.

ence,

ence, when he ſhould no longer poſſeſs any authority to command?

This addreſs was made with much good-nature and affection, to be ſure. But among the revolutions in France, muſt be reckoned a conſiderable revolution in their ideas of politeneſs. In England we are ſaid to learn manners at ſecond-hand from your ſide of the water, and that we dreſs our behaviour in the frippery of France. If ſo, we are ſtill in the old cut; and have not ſo far conformed to the new Pariſian mode of good-breeding, as to think it quite in the moſt refined ſtrain of delicate compliment (whether in condolence or congratulation) to ſay, to the moſt humiliated creature that crawls upon the earth, that great public benefits are derived from the murder of his ſervants, the attempted aſſaſſination of himſelf and of his wife, and the mortification, diſgrace, and degradation, that he has perſonally ſuffered. It is a topic of conſolation which our ordinary of Newgate would be too humane to uſe to a criminal at the foot of the gallows. I ſhould have thought that the hangman of Paris, now that he is liberalized by the vote of the national aſſembly, and is allowed his rank and arms in the herald's college of the rights of men, would be too generous, too gallant a man, too full of the ſenſe of his new dignity, to employ that cutting conſolation to any of the perſons whom the *lexe nation* might bring under the adminiſtration of his *executive powers*.

A man is fallen indeed, when he is thus flattered. The anodyne draught of oblivion, thus drugged, is well calculated to preſerve a galling wakefulneſs, and to feed the living ulcer of a corroding memory. Thus to adminiſter the opiate potion of amneſty, powdered with all the ingredients of ſcorn and contempt, is to hold to his lips, inſtead of "the balm of hurt minds," the cup of human

miſery full to the brim, and to force him to drink it to the dregs.

Yielding to reaſons, at leaſt as forcible as thoſe which were ſo delicately urged in the compliment on the new year, the king of France will probably endeavour to forget theſe events, and that compliment. But Hiſtory, who keeps a durable record of all our acts, and exerciſes her awful cenſure over the proceedings of all ſorts of ſovereigns, will not forget, either thoſe events, or the æra of this liberal refinement in the intercourſe of mankind. Hiſtory will record, that on the morning of the 6th of October 1789, the king and queen of France, after a day of confuſion, alarm, diſmay, and ſlaughter, lay down, under the pledged ſecurity of public faith, to indulge nature in a few hours of reſpite, and troubled melancholy repoſe. From this ſleep the queen was firſt ſtartled by the voice of the centinel at her door, who cried out to her, to ſave herſelf by flight—that this was the laſt proof of fidelity he could give—that they were upon him, and he was dead. Inſtantly he was cut down. A band of cruel ruffians and aſſaſſins, reeking with his blood, ruſhed into the chamber of the queen, and pierced with an hundred ſtrokes of bayonets and poniards the bed, from whence this perſecuted woman had but juſt time to fly almoſt naked, and through ways unknown to the murderers had eſcaped to ſeek refuge at the feet of a king and huſband, not ſecure of his own life for a moment.

This king, to ſay no more of him, and this queen, and their infant children (who once would have been the pride and hope of a great and generous people) were then forced to abandon the ſanctuary of the moſt ſplendid palace in the world, which they left ſwimming in blood, polluted by maſſacre, and ſtrewed with ſcattered limbs and mutilated carcaſes. Thence they were conducted into the capital of

their kingdom. Two had been ſelected from the unprovoked, unreſiſted, promiſcuous ſlaughter, which was made of the gentlemen of birth and family who compoſed the king's body guard. Theſe two gentlemen, with all the parade of an execution of juſtice, were cruelly and publickly dragged to the block, and beheaded in the great court of the palace. Their heads were ſtuck upon ſpears, and led the proceſſion; whilſt the royal captives who followed in the train were ſlowly moved along, amidſt the horrid yells, and ſhrilling ſcreams, and frantic dances, and infamous contumelies, and all the unutterable abominations of the furies of hell, in the abuſed ſhape of the vileſt of women. After they had been made to taſte, drop by drop, more than the bitterneſs of death, in the ſlow torture of a journey of twelve miles, protracted to ſix hours, they were, under a guard, compoſed of thoſe very ſoldiers who had thus conducted them through this famous triumph, lodged in one of the old palaces of Paris, now converted into a Baſtile for kings.

Is this a triumph to be conſecrated at altars? to be commemorated with grateful thankſgiving? to be offered to the divine humanity with fervent prayer and enthuſiaſtick ejaculation?—Theſe Theban and Thracian Orgies, acted in France, and applauded only in the Old Jewry, I aſſure you, kindle prophetic enthuſiaſm in the minds but of very few people in this kingdom; although a ſaint and apoſtle, who may have revelations of his own, and who has ſo completely vanquiſhed all the mean ſuperſtitions of the heart, may incline to think it pious and decorous to compare it with the entrance into the world of the Prince of Peace, proclaimed in an holy temple by a venerable ſage, and not long before not worſe announced by the voice of angels to the quiet innocence of ſhepherds.

At

At firſt I was at a loſs to account for this fit of unguarded tranſport. I knew, indeed, that the ſufferings of monarchs make a delicious repaſt to ſome ſort of palates. There were reflections which might ſerve to keep this appetite within ſome bounds of temperance. But when I took one circumſtance into my conſideration, I was obliged to confeſs, that much allowance ought to be made for the Society, and that the temptation was too ſtrong for common diſcretion; I mean, the circumſtance of the Io Pæan of the triumph, the animating cry which called "for *all* the BISHOPS to be "hanged on the lamp-poſts*," might well have brought forth a burſt of enthuſiaſm on the foreſeen conſequences of this happy day. I allow to ſo much enthuſiaſm ſome little deviation from prudence. I allow this prophet to break forth into hymns of joy and thankſgiving on an event which appears like the precurſor of the Millenium, and the projected fifth monarchy, in the deſtruction of all church eſtabliſhments. There was, however (as in all human affairs there is) in the midſt of this joy ſomething to exerciſe the patience of theſe worthy gentlemen, and to try the long-ſuffering of their faith. The actual murder of the king and queen, and their child, was wanting to the other auſpicious circumſtances of this "*beautiful day*." The actual murder of the biſhops, though called for by ſo many holy ejaculations, was alſo wanting. A groupe of regicide and ſacrilegious ſlaughter, was indeed boldly ſketched, but it was only ſketched. It unhappily was left unfiniſhed, in this great hiſtory-piece of the maſſacre of innocents. What hardy pencil of a great maſter, from the ſchool of the rights of men, will finiſh it, is to be ſeen hereafter. The age has not yet the compleat benefit of that diffuſion of knowledge that has undermined

* Tous les Evêques à la lanterne.

ſuperſtition and error; and the king of France wants another object or two, to conſign to oblivion, in conſideration of all the good which is to ariſe from his own ſufferings, and the patriotic crimes of an enlightened age *.

Although this work of our new light and knowledge, did not go to the length that in all probability it was intended it ſhould be carried; yet I muſt think, that ſuch treatment of any human creatures muſt be ſhocking to any but thoſe who are made for accompliſhing revolutions. But I cannot ſtop here. Influenced by the inborn feelings of my nature, and not being illuminated by a ſingle ray of this new-ſprung modern light, I confeſs to you, Sir, that the exalted rank of the perſons ſuffering, and particularly the ſex, the beauty, and the amiable qualities of the deſcendant of ſo many kings and

* It is proper here to refer to a letter written upon this ſubject by an eye-witneſs. That eye-witneſs was one of the moſt honeſt, intelligent, and eloquent members of the national aſſembly, one of the moſt active and zealous reformers of the ſtate. He was obliged to ſecede from the aſſembly; and he afterwards became a voluntary exile, on account of the horrors of this pious triumph, and the diſpoſitions of men, who, profiting of crimes, if not cauſing them, have taken the lead in public affairs.

EXTRACT of M. de Lally Tollendal's Second Letter to a Friend.

« Parlons du parti que j'ai pris; il eſt bien juſtifié dans ma conſcience.—Ni cette ville coupable, ni cette aſſemblée plus coupable encore, ne meritoient que je me juſtifie; mais j'ai à cœur que vous, et les perſonnes qui penſent comme vous, ne me condamnent pas.—Ma ſanté, je vous jure, me rendoit mes fonctions impoſſibles; mais meme en les mettant de coté il a eté au-deſſus de mes forces de ſupporter plus long-tems l'horreur que me cauſoit ce ſang,—ces têtes,—cette reine *preſque egorgée*,—ce roi,—amené *eſclave*,—entrant à Paris, au milieu de ſes aſſaſſins, et precedé des têtes de ſes malheureux gardes.—Ces perfides janniſſaires, ces aſſaſſins, ces femmes cannibales, ce cri de, TOUS LES EVEQUES A LA LANTERNE, dans le moment ou le roi entre ſa capitale avec deux eveques de ſon conſeil dans ſa voiture. Un *coup de fuſil*, que j'ai vu tirer dans un *des caroſſes de la reine*. M. Bailley appellant cela *un beau jour*. L'aſſemblée ayant declaré froidement le matin, qu'il n'étoit pas de ſa dignité d'aller toute entiere environner le roi. M. Mirabeau diſant impunement dans cette aſſemblée, que le vaiſſeau de l'état, loins d'etre arrêté dans ſa courſe, s'élanceroit avec plus de rapidité que jamais

and emperors, with the tender age of royal infants, inſenſible only through infancy and innocence of the cruel outrages to which their parents were expoſed, inſtead of being a ſubject of exultation, adds not a little to my ſenſibility on that moſt melancholy occaſion.

I hear that the auguſt perſon, who was the principal object of our preacher's triumph, though he ſupported himſelf, felt much on that ſhameful occaſion. As a man, it became him to feel for his wife and his children, and the faithful guards of his perſon, that were maſſacred in cold blood about him; as a prince, it became him to feel for the ſtrange and frightful transformation of his civilized ſubjects, and to be more grieved for them, than ſolicitous for himſelf. It de-

jamais vers ſa régénération. M. Barnave, riant avec lui, quand des flots de ſang couloient autour de nous. Le vertueux Mounier* echappant par miracle à vingt aſſaſſins, qui avoient voulu faire de ſa tete un trophée de plus.

" Voila ce qui me fit jurer de ne plus mettre le pied *dans cette caverne d'Antropophages* [the national aſſembly] où je n'avois plus de force d'élever la voix, ou depuis ſix ſemaines je l'avois elevée en vain. Moi, Mounier, et tous les honnêtes gens, ont le dernier effort à faire pour le bien étoit d'en ſortir. Aucune idée de crainte ne s'eſt approchée de moi. Je rougirois de m'en defendre. J'avois encore reçû ſur la route de la part de ce peuple, moins coupable que ceux qui l'ont enivré de fureur, des acclamations, et des applaudiſſements, dont d'autres auroient été flattés, et qui m'ont fait fremir. C'eſt à l'indignation, c'eſt à l'horreur, c'eſt aux convulſions phyſiques, que le ſeul aſpect du ſang me fait eprouver que j'ai cedé. On brave une ſeule mort; on la brave pluſieurs fois, quand elle peut être utile. Mais aucune puiſſance ſous le Ciel, mais aucune opinion publique ou privée n'ont le droit de me condamner à ſouffrir inutilement mille ſupplices par minute, et à perir de déſeſpoir, de rage, au milieu des *triomphes*, du crime que je n'ai pu arrêter. Ils me proſcriront, ils confiſqueront mes biens. Je labourerai la terre, et je ne les verrai plus.—Voila ma juſtification. Vous pourez la lire, la montrer, la laiſſer copier; tant pis pour ceux qui ne la comprendront pas; ce ne ſera alors moi qui auroit eu tort de la leur donner."

This military man had not ſo good nerves as the peaceable gentleman of the Old Jewry.—See Monſ. Mounier's narrative of theſe tranſactions; a man alſo of honour and virtue, and talents, and therefore a fugitive.

*, *N. B.* Mr. Mounier was then ſpeaker of the national aſſembly. He has ſince been obliged to live in exile, though one of the firmeſt aſſertors of liberty.

rogates

rogates little from his fortitude, while it adds infinitely to the honour of his humanity. I am very ſorry to ſay it, very ſorry indeed, that ſuch perſonages are in a ſituation in which it is not unbecoming in us to praiſe the virtues of the great.

I hear, and I rejoice to hear, that the great lady, the other object of the triumph, has borne that day (one is intereſted that beings made for ſuffering ſhould ſuffer well) and that ſhe bears all the ſucceeding days, that ſhe bears the impriſonment of her huſband, and her own captivity, and the exile of her friends, and the inſulting adulation of addreſſes, and the whole weight of her accumulated wrongs, with a ſerene patience, in a manner ſuited to her rank and race, and becoming the offſpring of a ſovereign diſtinguiſhed for her piety and her courage; that like her ſhe has lofty ſentiments; that ſhe feels with the dignity of a Roman matron; that in the laſt extremity ſhe will ſave herſelf from the laſt diſgrace, and that if ſhe muſt fall, ſhe will fall by no ignoble hand.

It is now ſixteen or ſeventeen years ſince I ſaw the queen of France, then the dauphineſs, at Verſailles; and ſurely never lighted on this orb, which ſhe hardly ſeemed to touch, a more delightful viſion. I ſaw her juſt above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated ſphere ſhe juſt began to move in,—glittering like the morning-ſtar, full of life, and ſplendor, and joy. Oh! what a revolution! and what an heart muſt I have, to contemplate without emotion that elevation and that fall! Little did I dream when ſhe added titles of veneration to thoſe of enthuſiaſtic, diſtant, reſpectful love, that ſhe ſhould ever be obliged to carry the ſharp antidote againſt diſgrace concealed in that boſom; little did I dream that I ſhould have lived to ſee ſuch diſaſters fallen upon her in a nation of gallant men, in a nation of men of honour and

of

of cavaliers. I thought ten thouſand ſwords muſt have leaped from their ſcabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with inſult.—But the age of chivalry is gone.—That of ſophiſters, œconomiſts, and calculators, has ſucceeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguiſhed for ever. Never, never more, ſhall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and ſex, that proud ſubmiſſion, that dignified obedience, that ſubordination of the heart, which kept alive, even in ſervitude itſelf, the ſpirit of an exalted freedom. The unbought grace of life, the cheap defence of nations, the nurſe of manly ſentiment and heroic enterprize is gone! It is gone, that ſenſibility of principle, that chaſtity of honour, which felt a ſtain like a wound, which inſpired courage whilſt it mitigated ferocity, which ennobled whatever it touched, and under which vice itſelf loſt half its evil, by loſing all its groſſneſs.

This mixed ſyſtem of opinion and ſentiment had its origin in the antient chivalry; and the principle, though varied in its appearance by the varying ſtate of human affairs, ſubſiſted and influenced through a long ſucceſſion of generations, even to the time we live in. If it ſhould ever be totally extinguiſhed, the loſs I fear will be great. It is this which has given its character to modern Europe. It is this which has diſtinguiſhed it under all its forms of government, and diſtinguiſhed it to its advantage, from the ſtates of Aſia, and poſſibly from thoſe ſtates which flouriſhed in the moſt brilliant periods of the antique world. It was this, which, without confounding ranks, had produced a noble equality, and handed it down through all the gradations of ſocial life. It was this opinion which mitigated kings into companions, and raiſed private men to be fellows with kings. Without force, or oppoſition, it ſubdued the fierceneſs of pride and power; it obliged ſovereigns to ſubmit to

the ſoft collar of ſocial eſteem, compelled ſtern authority to ſubmit to elegance, and gave a domination vanquiſher of laws, to be ſubdued by manners.

But now all is to be changed. All the pleaſing illuſions, which made power gentle, and obedience liberal, which harmonized the different ſhades of life, and which, by a bland aſſimilation, incorporated into politics the ſentiments which beautify and ſoften private ſociety, are to be diſſolved by this new conquering empire of light and reaſon. All the decent drapery of life is to be rudely torn off. All the ſuperadded ideas, furniſhed from the wardrobe of a moral imagination, which the heart owns, and the underſtanding ratifies, as neceſſary to cover the defects of our naked ſhivering nature, and to raiſe it to dignity in our own eſtimation, are to be exploded as a ridiculous, abſurd, and antiquated faſhion.

On this ſcheme of things, a king is but a man, a queen is but a woman; a woman is but an animal; and an animal not of the higheſt order. All homage paid to the ſex in general as ſuch, and without diſtinct views, is to be regarded as romance and folly. Regicide, and parricide, and ſacrilege, are but fictions of ſuperſtition, corrupting juriſprudence by deſtroying its ſimplicity. The murder of a king, or a queen, or a biſhop, or a father, are only common homicide; and if the people are by any chance, or in any way gainers by it, a ſort of homicide much the moſt pardonable, and into which we ought not to make too ſevere a ſcrutiny.

On the ſcheme of this barbarous philoſophy, which is the offſpring of cold hearts and muddy underſtandings, and which is as void of ſolid wiſdom, as it is deſtitute of all taſte and elegance, laws are to be ſupported only by their own terrors, and by the concern, which each individual may find in them, from his own private ſpeculations, or can-

ſpare

ſpare to them from his own private intereſts. In the groves of *their* academy, at the end of every viſto, you ſee nothing but the gallows. Nothing is left which engages the affections on the part of the commonwealth. On the principles of this mechanic philoſophy, our inſtitutions can never be embodied, if I may uſe the expreſſion, in perſons; ſo as to create in us love, veneration, admiration, or attachment. But that ſort of reaſon which baniſhes the affections is incapable of filling their place. Theſe public affections, combined with manners, are required ſometimes as ſupplements, ſometimes as correctives, always as aids to law. The precept given by a wiſe man, as well as a great critic, for the conſtruction of poems, is equally true as to ſtates. *Non ſatis eſt pulchra eſſe poemata, dulcia ſunto.* There ought to be a ſyſtem of manners in every nation which a well-formed mind would be diſpoſed to reliſh. To make us love our country, our country ought to be lovely.

But power, of ſome kind or other, will ſurvive the ſhock in which manners and opinions periſh; and it will find other and worſe means for its ſupport. The uſurpation which, in order to ſubvert antient inſtitutions, has deſtroyed antient principles, will hold power by arts ſimilar to thoſe by which it has acquired it. When the old feudal and chivalrous ſpirit of *fealty*, which, by freeing kings from fear, freed both kings and ſubjects from the precautions of tyranny, ſhall be extinct in the minds of men, plots and aſſaſſinations will be anticipated by preventive murder and preventive confiſcation, and that long roll of grim and bloody maxims, which form the political code of all power, not ſtanding on its own honour, and the honour of thoſe who are to obey it. Kings will be tyrants from policy when ſubjects are rebels from principle.

When antient opinions and rules of life are taken away,

the loſs cannot poſſibly be eſtimated. From that moment we have no compaſs to govern us; nor can we know diſtinctly to what port we ſteer. Europe undoubtedly, taken in a maſs, was in a flouriſhing condition the day on which your revolution was compleated. How much of that proſperous ſtate was owing to the ſpirit of our old manners and opinions is not eaſy to ſay; but as ſuch cauſes cannot be indifferent in their operation, we muſt preſume, that, on the whole, their operation was beneficial.

We are but too apt to conſider things in the ſtate in which we find them, without ſufficiently adverting to the cauſes by which they have been produced, and poſſibly may be upheld. Nothing is more certain, than that our manners, our civilization, and all the good things which are connected with manners, and with civilization, have, in this European world of ours, depended for ages upon two principles; and were indeed the reſult of both combined; I mean the ſpirit of a gentleman, and the ſpirit of religion. The nobility and the clergy, the one by profeſſion, the other by patronage, kept learning in exiſtence, even in the midſt of arms and confuſions, and whilſt governments were rather in their cauſes than formed. Learning paid back what it received to nobility and to prieſthood; and paid it with uſury, by enlarging their ideas, and by furniſhing their minds. Happy if they had all continued to know their indiſſoluble union, and their proper place! Happy if learning, not debauched by ambition, had been ſatisfied to continue the inſtructor, and not aſpired to be the maſter! Along with its natural protectors and guardians, learning will be caſt into the mire, and trodden down under the hoofs of a ſwiniſh multitude.

If, as I ſuſpect, modern letters owe more than they are always willing to own to antient manners, ſo do other intereſts

tereſts which we value full as much as they are worth. Even commerce, and trade, and manufacture, the gods of our œconomical politicians, are themſelves perhaps but creatures; are themſelves but effects, which, as firſt cauſes, we chooſe to worſhip. They certainly grew under the ſame ſhade in which learning flouriſhed. They too may decay with their natural protecting principles. With you, for the preſent at leaſt, they all threaten to diſappear together. Where trade and manufactures are wanting to a people, and the ſpirit of nobility and religion remains, ſentiment ſupplies, and not always ill ſupplies their place; but if commerce and the arts ſhould be loſt in an experiment to try how well a ſtate may ſtand without theſe old fundamental principles, what ſort of a thing muſt be a nation of groſs, ſtupid, ferocious, and at the ſame time, poor and ſordid barbarians, deſtitute of religion, honour, or manly pride, poſſeſſing nothing at preſent, and hoping for nothing hereafter?

I wiſh you may not be going faſt, and by the ſhorteſt cut, to that horrible and diſguſtful ſituation. Already there appears a poverty of conception, a coarſeneſs and vulgarity in all the proceedings of the aſſembly and of all their inſtructors. Their liberty is not liberal. Their ſcience is preſumptuous ignorance. Their humanity is ſavage and brutal.

It is not clear, whether in England we learned thoſe grand and decorous principles, and manners, of which conſiderable traces yet remain, from you, or whether you took them from us. But to you, I think, we trace them beſt. You ſeem to me to be—*gentis incunabula noſtræ*. France has always more or leſs influenced manners in England; and when your fountain is choaked up and polluted, the ſtream will not run long, or not run clear with us, or perhaps with

any nation. This gives all Europe, in my opinion, but too cloſe and connected a concern in what is done in France. Excuſe me, therefore, if I have dwelt too long on the atrocious ſpectacle of the ſixth of October 1789, or have given too much ſcope to the reflections which have ariſen in my mind on occaſion of the moſt important of all revolutions, which may be dated from that day, I mean a revolution in ſentiments, manners, and moral opinions. As things now ſtand, with every thing reſpectable deſtroyed without us, and an attempt to deſtroy within us every principle of reſpect, one is almoſt forced to apologize for harbouring the common feelings of men.

Why do I feel ſo differently from the Reverend Dr. Price, and thoſe of his lay flock, who will chooſe to adopt the ſentiments of his diſcourſe?—For this plain reaſon—becauſe it is *natural* I ſhould; becauſe we are ſo made as to be affected at ſuch ſpectacles with melancholy ſentiments upon the unſtable condition of mortal proſperity, and the tremendous uncertainty of human greatneſs; becauſe in thoſe natural feelings we learn great leſſons; becauſe in events like theſe our paſſions inſtruct our reaſon; becauſe when kings are hurl'd from their thrones by the Supreme Director of this great drama, and become the objects of inſult to the baſe, and of pity to the good, we behold ſuch diſaſters in the moral, as we ſhould behold a miracle in the phyſical order of things. We are alarmed into reflection; our minds (as it has long ſince been obſerved) are purified by terror and pity; our weak unthinking pride is humbled, under the diſpenſations of a myſterious wiſdom.—Some tears might be drawn from me, if ſuch a ſpectacle were exhibited on the ſtage. I ſhould be truly aſhamed of finding in myſelf that ſuperficial, theatric ſenſe of painted diſtreſs, whilſt I could exult over it in real life. With ſuch a perverted mind, I could

could never venture to ſhew my face at a tragedy. People would think the tears that Garrick formerly, or that Siddons not long ſince, have extorted from me, were the tears of hypocriſy; I ſhould know them to be the tears of folly.

Indeed the theatre is a better ſchool of moral ſentiments than churches, where the feelings of humanity are thus outraged. Poets, who have to deal with an audience not yet graduated in the ſchool of the rights of men, and who muſt apply themſelves to the moral conſtitution of the heart, would not dare to produce ſuch a triumph as a matter of exultation. There, where men follow their natural impulſes, they would not bear the odious maxims of a Machiavelian policy, whether applied to the attainment of monarchical or democratic tyranny. They would reject them on the modern, as they once did on the antient ſtage, where they could not bear even the hypothetical propoſition of ſuch wickedneſs in the mouth of a perſonated tyrant, though ſuitable to the character he ſuſtained. No theatric audience in Athens would bear what has been borne, in the midſt of the real tragedy of this triumphal day; a principal actor weighing, as it were in ſcales hung in a ſhop of horrors,—ſo much actual crime againſt ſo much contingent advantage,—and after putting in and out weights, declaring that the balance was on the ſide of the advantages. They would not bear to ſee the crimes of new democracy poſted as in a ledger againſt the crimes of old deſpotiſm, and the book-keepers of politics finding democracy ſtill in debt, but by no means unable or unwilling to pay the balance. In the theatre, the firſt intuitive glance, without any elaborate proceſs of reaſoning, would ſhew, that this method of political computation, would juſtify every extent of crime. They would ſee, that on theſe principles, even where the very worſt acts were not perpetrated, it was owing rather to

the fortune of the conſpirators than to their parſimony in the expenditure of treachery and blood. They would ſoon ſee, that criminal means once tolerated are ſoon preferred. They preſent a ſhorter cut to the object than through the highway of the moral virtues. Juſtifying perfidy and murder for public benefit, public benefit would ſoon become the pretext, and perfidy and murder the end; until rapacity, malice, revenge, and fear more dreadful than revenge, could ſatiate their inſatiable appetites. Such muſt be the conſequences of loſing in the ſplendour of theſe triumphs of the rights of men, all natural ſenſe of wrong and right.

But the Reverend Paſtor exults in this "leading in tri-"umph," becauſe truly Louis XVIth was "an arbitrary "monarch;" that is, in other words, neither more nor leſs, than becauſe he was Louis the XVIth, and becauſe he had the misfortune to be born king of France, with the prerogatives of which, a long line of anceſtors, and a long acquieſcence of the people, without any act of his, had put him in poſſeſſion. A misfortune it has indeed turned out to him, that he was born king of France. But misfortune is not crime, nor is indiſcretion always the greateſt guilt. I ſhall never think that a prince, the acts of whoſe whole reign were a ſeries of conceſſions to his ſubjects, who was willing to relax his authority, to remit his prerogatives, to call his people to a ſhare of freedom, not known, perhaps not deſired by their anceſtors; ſuch a prince, though he ſhould be ſubject to the common frailties attached to men and to princes, though he ſhould have once thought it neceſſary to provide force againſt the deſperate deſigns manifeſtly carrying on againſt his perſon, and the remnants of his authority; though all this ſhould be taken into conſideration, I ſhall be led with great difficulty to think he deſerves the cruel and inſulting triumph of Paris, and of Dr. Price. I

tremble

tremble for the cauſe of liberty, from ſuch an example to kings. I tremble for the cauſe of humanity, in the unpuniſhed outrages of the moſt wicked of mankind. But there are ſome people of that low and degenerate faſhion of mind, that they look up with a ſort of complacent awe and admiration to kings, who know to keep firm in their ſeat, to hold a ſtrict hand over their ſubjects, to aſſert their prerogative, and by the awakened vigilance of a ſevere deſpotiſm, to guard againſt the very firſt approaches of freedom. Againſt ſuch as theſe they never elevate their voice. Deſerters from principle, liſted with fortune, they never ſee any good in ſuffering virtue, nor any crime in proſperous uſurpation.

If it could have been made clear to me, that the king and queen of France (thoſe I mean who were ſuch before the triumph) were inexorable and cruel tyrants, that they had formed a deliberate ſcheme for maſſacring the national aſſembly (I think I have ſeen ſomething like the latter inſinuated in certain publications) I ſhould think their captivity juſt. If this be true, much more ought to have been done, but done, in my opinion, in another manner. The puniſhment of real tyrants is a noble and awful act of juſtice; and it has with truth been ſaid to be conſolatory to the human mind. But if I were to puniſh a wicked king, I ſhould regard the dignity in avenging the crime. Juſtice is grave and decorous, and in its puniſhments rather ſeems to ſubmit to a neceſſity, than to make a choice. Had Nero, or Agrippina, or Louis the Eleventh, or Charles the Ninth, been the ſubject; if Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, after the murder of Patkul, or his predeceſſor Chriſtina, after the murder of Monaldeſchi, had fallen into your hands, Sir, or into mine, I am ſure our conduct would have been different.

If the French king, or king of the French, (or by whatever name he is known in the new vocabulary of your conſtitution)

ſtitution) has in his own perſon, and that of his queen, really deſerved theſe unavowed but unavenged murderous attempts, and thoſe ſubſequent indignities more cruel than murder, ſuch a perſon would ill deſerve even that ſubordinate executory truſt, which I underſtand is to be placed in him; nor is he fit to be called chief in a nation which he has outraged and oppreſſed. A worſe choice for ſuch an office in a new commonwealth, than that of a depoſed tyrant, could not poſſibly be made. But to degrade and inſult a man as the worſt of criminals, and afterwards to truſt him in your higheſt concerns, as a faithful, honeſt, and zealous ſervant, is not conſiſtent in reaſoning, nor prudent in policy, nor ſafe in practice. Thoſe who could make ſuch an appointment muſt be guilty of a more flagrant breach of truſt than any they have yet committed againſt the people. As this is the only crime in which your leading politicians could have acted inconſiſtently, I conclude that there is no ſort of ground for theſe horrid inſinuations. I think no better of all the other calumnies.

In England, we give no credit to them. We are generous enemies: we are faithful allies. We ſpurn from us with diſguſt and indignation the ſlanders of thoſe who bring us their anecdotes with the atteſtation of the flower-de-luce on their ſhoulder. We have Lord George Gordon faſt in Newgate; and neither his being a public proſelyte to Judaiſm, nor his having, in his zeal againſt Catholick prieſts and all ſort of eccleſiaſtics, raiſed a mob (excuſe the term, it is ſtill in uſe here) which pulled down all our priſons, have preſerved to him a liberty, of which he did not render himſelf worthy by a virtuous uſe of it. We have rebuilt Newgate, and tenanted the manſion. We have priſons almoſt as ſtrong as the Baſtile, for thoſe who dare to libel the queens of France. In this ſpiritual retreat, let the noble libeller remain.

remain. Let him there meditate on his Thalmud, until he learns a conduct more becoming his birth and parts, and not ſo diſgraceful to the antient religion to which he has become a proſelyte; or until ſome perſons from your ſide of the water, to pleaſe your new Hebrew brethren, ſhall ranſom him. He may then be enabled to purchaſe, with the old hoards of the ſynagogue, and a very ſmall poundage, on the long compound intereſt of the thirty pieces of ſilver (Dr. Price has ſhewn us what miracles compound intereſt will perform in 1790 years) the lands which are lately diſcovered to have been uſurped by the Gallican church. Send us your popiſh Archbiſhop of Paris, and we will ſend you our proteſtant Rabbin. We ſhall treat the perſon you ſend us in exchange like a gentleman and an honeſt man, as he is; but pray let him bring with him the fund of his hoſpitality, bounty, and charity; and, depend upon it, we ſhall never confiſcate a ſhilling of that honourable and pious fund, nor think of enriching the treaſury with the ſpoils of the poor-box.

To tell you the truth, my dear Sir, I think the honour of our nation to be ſomewhat concerned in the diſclaimer of the proceedings of this ſociety of the Old Jewry and the London Tavern. I have no man's proxy. I ſpeak only from myſelf; when I diſclaim, as I do with all poſſible earneſtneſs, all communion with the actors in that triumph, or with the admirers of it. When I aſſert any thing elſe, as concerning the people of England, I ſpeak from obſervation not from authority; but I ſpeak from the experience I have had in a pretty extenſive and mixed communication with the inhabitants of this kingdom, of all deſcriptions and ranks, and after a courſe of attentive obſervation, began early in life, and continued for near forty years. I have often been aſtoniſhed, conſidering that we are divided from you but by a ſlender dyke of about twenty-four miles, and that

the mutual intercourſe between the two countries has lately been very great, to find how little you ſeem to know of us. I ſuſpect that this is owing to your forming a judgment of this nation from certain publications, which do, very erroneouſly, if they do at all, repreſent the opinions and diſpoſitions generally prevalent in England. The vanity, reſtleſſneſs, petulance, and ſpirit of intrigue of ſeveral petty cabals, who attempt to hide their total want of conſequence in buſtle and noiſe, and puffing, and mutual quotation of each other, makes you imagine that our contemptuous neglect of their abilities is a mark of general acquieſcence in their opinions. No ſuch thing, I aſſure you. Becauſe half a dozen graſhoppers under a fern make the field ring with their importunate chink, whilſt thouſands of great cattle, repoſed beneath the ſhadow of the Britiſh oak, chew the cud and are ſilent, pray do not imagine, that thoſe who make the noiſe are the only inhabitants of the field; that of courſe, they are many in number; or that, after all, they are other than the little ſhrivelled, meagre, hopping, though loud and troubleſome inſects of the hour.

I almoſt venture to affirm, that not one in a hundred amongſt us participates in the "triumph" of the revolution ſociety. If the king and queen of France, and their children, were to fall into our hands by the chance of war, in the moſt acrimonious of all hoſtilities (I deprecate ſuch an event, I deprecate ſuch hoſtility) they would be treated with another ſort of triumphal entry into London. We formerly have had a king of France in that ſituation; you have read how he was treated by the victor in the field; and in what manner he was afterwards received in England. Four hundred years have gone over us; but I believe we are not materially changed ſince that period. Thanks to our ſullen reſiſtance to innovation, thanks to the cold ſluggiſhneſs of our national character,

character, we ſtill bear the ſtamp of our forefathers. We have not (as I conceive) loſt the generoſity and dignity of thinking of the fourteenth century; nor as yet have we ſubtilized ourſelves into ſavages. We are not the converts of Rouſſeau; we are not the diſciples of Voltaire; Helvetius has made no progreſs amongſt us. Atheiſts are not our preachers; madmen are not our lawgivers. We know that *we* have made no diſcoveries; and we think that no diſcoveries are to be made, in morality; nor many in the great principles of government, nor in the ideas of liberty, which were underſtood long before we were born, altogether as well as they will be after the grave has heaped its mould upon our preſumption, and the ſilent tomb ſhall have impoſed its law on our pert loquacity. In England we have not yet been completely embowelled of our natural entrails; we ſtill feel within us, and we cheriſh and cultivate, thoſe inbred ſentiments which are the faithful guardians, the active monitors of our duty, the true ſupporters of all liberal and manly morals. We have not been drawn and truſſed, in order that we may be filled, like ſtuffed birds in a muſeum, with chaff and rags, and paltry blurred ſhreds of paper about the rights of man. We preſerve the whole of our feelings ſtill native and entire, unſophiſticated by pedantry and infidelity. We have real hearts of fleſh and blood beating in our boſoms. We fear God; we look up with awe to kings; with affection to parliaments; with duty to magiſtrates; with reverence to prieſts; and with reſpect to nobility *. Why?

* The Engliſh are, I conceive, miſrepreſented in a Letter publiſhed in one of the papers, by a gentleman thought to be a diſſenting miniſter.—When writing to Dr. Price, of the ſpirit which prevails at Paris, he ſays, "The ſpirit of the people in this place has aboliſhed "all the proud *diſtinctions* which the *king* and *nobles* had uſurped in their minds; whether "they talk of *the king*, *the noble*, *or the prieſt*, their whole language is that of the moſt *en-*"*lightened and liberal amongſt the Engliſh.*" If this gentleman means to confine the terms *enlightened and liberal* to one ſet of men in England, it may be true. It is not generally ſo.

Becauſe when ſuch ideas are brought before our minds, it is *natural* to be ſo affected; becauſe all other feelings are falſe and ſpurious, and tend to corrupt our minds, to vitiate our primary morals, to render us unfit for rational liberty; and by teaching us a ſervile, licentious, and abandoned inſolence, to be our low ſport for a few holidays, to make us perfectly fit for, and juſtly deſerving of ſlavery, through the whole courſe of our lives.

You ſee, Sir, that in this enlightened age I am bold enough to confeſs, that we are generally men of untaught feelings; that inſtead of caſting away all our old prejudices, we cheriſh them to a very conſiderable degree, and, to take more ſhame to ourſelves, we cheriſh them becauſe they are prejudices; and the longer they have laſted, and the more generally they have prevailed, the more we cheriſh them. We are afraid to put men to live and trade each on his own private ſtock of reaſon; becauſe we ſuſpect that this ſtock in each man is ſmall, and that the individuals would do better to avail themſelves of the general bank and capital of nations, and of ages. Many of our men of ſpeculation, inſtead of exploding general prejudices, employ their ſagacity to diſcover the latent wiſdom which prevails in them. If they find what they ſeek, and they ſeldom fail, they think it more wiſe to continue the prejudice, with the reaſon involved, than to caſt away the coat of prejudice, and to leave nothing but the naked reaſon; becauſe prejudice, with its reaſon, has a motive to give action to that reaſon, and an affection which will give it permanence. Prejudice is of ready application in the emergency; it previouſly engages the mind in a ſteady courſe of wiſdom and virtue, and does not leave the man heſitating in the moment of deciſion, ſceptical, puzzled, and unreſolved. Prejudice renders a man's virtue his habit; and not

not a ſeries of unconnected acts. Through juſt prejudice, his duty becomes a part of his nature.

Your literary men, and your politicians, and ſo do the whole clan of the enlightened among us, eſſentially differ in theſe points. They have no reſpect for the wiſdom of others; but they pay it off by a very full meaſure of confidence in their own. With them it is a ſufficient motive to deſtroy an old ſcheme of things, becauſe it is an old one. As to the new, they are in no ſort of fear with regard to the duration of a building run up in haſte; becauſe duration is no object to thoſe who think little or nothing has been done before their time, and who place all their hopes in diſcovery. They conceive, very ſyſtematically, that all things which give perpetuity are miſchievous, and therefore they are at inexpiable war with all eſtabliſhments. They think that government may vary like modes of dreſs, and with as little ill effect. That there needs no principle of attachment, except a ſenſe of preſent conveniency, to any conſtitution of the ſtate. They always ſpeak as if they were of opinion that there is a ſingular ſpecies of compact between them and their magiſtrates, which binds the magiſtrate, but which has nothing reciprocal in it, but that the majeſty of the people has a right to diſſolve it without any reaſon, but its will. Their attachment to their country itſelf, is only ſo far as it agrees with ſome of their fleeting projects; it begins and ends with that ſcheme of polity which falls in with their momentary opinion.

Theſe doctrines, or rather ſentiments, ſeem prevalent with your new ſtateſmen. But they are wholly different from thoſe on which we have always acted in this country.

I hear it is ſometimes given out in France, that what is doing among you is after the example of England. I beg leave to affirm, that ſcarcely any thing done with you has originated

originated from the practice or the prevalent opinions of this people, either in the act or in the ſpirit of the proceeding. Let me add, that we are as unwilling to learn theſe leſſons from France, as we are ſure that we never taught them to that nation. The cabals here who take a ſort of ſhare in your tranſactions as yet conſiſt but of an handful of people. If unfortunately by their intrigues, their ſermons, their publications, and by a confidence derived from an expected union with the counſels and forces of the French nation, they ſhould draw conſiderable numbers into their faction, and in conſequence ſhould ſeriouſly attempt any thing here in imitation of what has been done with you, the event, I dare venture to propheſy, will be, that, with ſome trouble to their country, they will ſoon accompliſh their own deſtruction. This people refuſed to change their law in remote ages, from reſpect to the infallibility of popes; and they will not now alter it from a pious implicit faith in the dogmatiſm of philoſophers; though the former was armed with the anathema and cruſade, and though the latter ſhould act with the libel and the lamp-iron.

Formerly your affairs were your own concern only. We felt for them as men; but we kept aloof from them, becauſe we were not citizens of France. But when we ſee the model held up to ourſelves, we muſt feel as Engliſhmen, and feeling, we muſt provide as Engliſhmen. Your affairs, in ſpite of us, are made a part of our intereſt; ſo far at leaſt as to keep at a diſtance your panacea, or your plague. If it be a panacea, we do not want it. We know the conſequences of unneceſſary phyſic. If it be a plague; it is ſuch a plague, that the precautions of the moſt ſevere quarantine ought to be eſtabliſhed againſt it.

I hear on all hands that a cabal, calling itſelf philoſophic, receives the glory of many of the late proceedings; and that

their opinions and ſyſtems are the true actuating ſpirit of the whole of them. I have heard of no party in England, literary or political, at any time, known by ſuch a deſcription. It is not with you compoſed of thoſe men, is it? whom the vulgar, in their blunt homely ſtyle, commonly call Atheiſts and Infidels? If it be, I admit that we too have had writers of that deſcription, who made ſome noiſe in their day. At preſent they repoſe in laſting oblivion. Who, born within the laſt forty years, has read one word of Collins, and Toland, and Tindal, and Chubb, and Morgan, and that whole race who called themſelves Freethinkers? Who now reads Bolingbroke? Who ever read him through? Aſk the bookſellers of London what is become of all theſe lights of the world. In as few years their few ſucceſſors will go to the family vault of "all the Capulets." But whatever they were, or are, with us, they were and are wholly unconnected individuals. With us they kept the common nature of their kind, and were not gregarious. They never acted in corps, nor were known as a faction in the ſtate, nor preſumed to influence, in that name or character, or for the purpoſes of ſuch a faction, on any of our public concerns. Whether they ought ſo to exiſt, and ſo be permitted to act, is another queſtion. As ſuch cabals have not exiſted in England, ſo neither has the ſpirit of them had any influence in eſtabliſhing the original frame of our conſtitution, or in any one of the ſeveral reparations and improvements it has undergone. The whole has been done under the auſpices, and is confirmed by the ſanctions of religion and piety. The whole has emanated from the ſimplicity of our national character, and from a ſort of native plainneſs and directneſs of underſtanding, which for a long time characterized thoſe men who have ſucceſſively obtained authority amongſt us. This

diſpoſition

diſpoſition ſtill remains, at leaſt in the great body of the people.

We know, and what is better, we feel inwardly, that religion is the baſis of civil ſociety, and the ſource of all good and of all comfort *. In England we are ſo convinced of this, that there is no ruſt of ſuperſtition, with which the accumulated abſurdity of the human mind might have cruſted it over in the courſe of ages, that ninety-nine in an hundred of the people of England would not prefer to impiety. We ſhall never be ſuch fools as to call in an enemy to the ſubſtance of any ſyſtem to remove its corruptions, to ſupply its defects, or to perfect its conſtruction. If our religious tenets ſhould ever want a further elucidation, we ſhall not call on atheiſm to explain them. We ſhall not light up our temple from that unhallowed fire. It will be illuminated with other lights. It will be perfumed with other incenſe, than the infectious ſtuff which is imported by the ſmugglers of adulterated metaphyſics. If our eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment ſhould want a reviſion, it is not avarice or rapacity, public or private, that we ſhall employ for the audit, or receipt, or application of its conſecrated revenue.—Violently condemning neither the Greek nor the Armenian, nor, ſince heats are ſubſided, the Roman ſyſtem of religion, we prefer the Proteſtant; not becauſe we think it has leſs of the Chriſtian religion in it, but becauſe, in our judgment, it has more. We are proteſtants, not from indifference but from zeal.

* Sit igitur hoc ab initio perſuaſum civibus, dominos eſſe omnium rerum ac moderatores, deos; eaque, quæ gerantur, eorum geri vi, ditione, ac numine; eoſdemque optime de genere hominum mereri; et qualis quiſque ſit, quid agat, quid in ſe admittat, qua mente, qua pietate colat religiones intueri: piorum et impiorum habere rationem. His enim rebus imbutæ mentes haud ſane abhorrebunt ab utili et a vera ſententia. Cic. de Legibus, l. 2.

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We know, and it is our pride to know, that man is by his conſtitution a religious animal; that atheiſm is againſt, not only our reaſon but our inſtincts; and that it cannot prevail long. But if, in the moment of riot, and in a drunken delirium from the hot ſpirit drawn out of the alembick of hell, which in France is now ſo furiouſly boiling, we ſhould uncover our nakedneſs by throwing off that Chriſtian religion which has hitherto been our boaſt and comfort, and one great ſource of civilization amongſt us, and among many other nations, we are apprehenſive (being well aware that the mind will not endure a void) that ſome uncouth, pernicious, and degrading ſuperſtition, might take place of it.

For that reaſon, before we take from our eſtabliſhment the natural human means of eſtimation, and give it up to contempt, as you have done, and in doing it have incurred the penalties you well deſerve to ſuffer, we deſire that ſome other may be preſented to us in the place of it. We ſhall then form our judgment.

On theſe ideas, inſtead of quarrelling with eſtabliſhments, as ſome do, who have made a philoſophy and a religion of their hoſtility to ſuch inſtitutions, we cleave cloſely to them. We are reſolved to keep an eſtabliſhed church, an eſtabliſhed monarchy, an eſtabliſhed ariſtocracy, and an eſtabliſhed democracy, each in the degree it exiſts, and in no greater. I ſhall ſhew you preſently how much of each of theſe we poſſeſs.

It has been the misfortune (not as theſe gentlemen think it, the glory) of this age, that every thing is to be diſcuſſed, as if the conſtitution of our country were to be always a ſubject rather of altercation than enjoyment. For this reaſon, as well as for the ſatisfaction of thoſe among you (if any ſuch you have among you) who may wiſh to profit of examples, I venture to trouble you with a few thoughts

upon each of theſe eſtabliſhments. I do not think they were unwiſe in antient Rome, who, when they wiſhed to new-model their laws, ſent commiſſioners to examine the beſt conſtituted republics within their reach.

Firſt, I beg leave to ſpeak of our church eſtabliſhment, which is the firſt of our prejudices, not a prejudice deſtitute of reaſon, but involving in it profound and extenſive wiſdom. I ſpeak of it firſt. It is firſt, and laſt, and midſt in our minds. For, taking ground on that religious ſyſtem, of which we are now in poſſeſſion, we continue to act on the early received, and uniformly continued ſenſe of mankind. That ſenſe not only, like a wiſe architect, hath built up the auguſt fabric of ſtates, but like a provident proprietor, to preſerve the ſtructure from prophanation and ruin, as a ſacred temple, purged from all the impurities of fraud, and violence, and injuſtice, and tyranny, hath ſolemnly and for ever conſecrated the commonwealth, and all that officiate in it. This conſecration is made, that all who adminiſter in the government of men, in which they ſtand in the perſon of God himſelf, ſhould have high and worthy notions of their function and deſtination; that their hope ſhould be full of immortality; that they ſhould not look to the paltry pelf of the moment, nor to the temporary and tranſient praiſe of the vulgar, but to a ſolid, permanent exiſtence, in the permanent part of their nature, and to a permanent fame and glory, in the example they leave as a rich inheritance to the world.

Such ſublime principles ought to be infuſed into perſons of exalted ſituations; and religious eſtabliſhments provided, that may continually revive and enforce them. Every ſort of moral, every ſort of civil, every ſort of politic inſtitution, aiding the rational and natural ties that connect the human underſtanding and affections to the divine, are not more than

neceſſary, in order to build up that wonderful ſtructure, Man; whoſe prerogative it is, to be in a great degree a creature of his own making; and who when made as he ought to be made, is deſtined to hold no trivial place in the creation. But whenever man is put over men, as the better nature ought ever to preſide, in that caſe more particularly, he ſhould as nearly as poſſible be approximated to his perfection.

The conſecration of the ſtate, by a ſtate religious eſtabliſhment, is neceſſary alſo to operate with an wholeſome awe upon free citizens; becauſe, in order to ſecure their freedom, they muſt enjoy ſome determinate portion of power. To them therefore a religion connected with the ſtate, and with their duty towards it, becomes even more neceſſary than in ſuch ſocieties, where the people by the terms of their ſubjection are confined to private ſentiments, and the management of their own family concerns. All perſons poſſeſſing any portion of power ought to be ſtrongly and awfully impreſſed with an idea that they act in truſt; and that they are to account for their conduct in that truſt to the one great maſter, author and founder of ſociety.

This principle ought even to be more ſtrongly impreſſed upon the minds of thoſe who compoſe the collective ſovereignty than upon thoſe of ſingle princes. Without inſtruments, theſe princes can do nothing. Whoever uſes inſtruments, in finding helps, finds alſo impediments. Their power is therefore by no means compleat; nor are they ſafe in extreme abuſe. Such perſons, however elevated by flattery, arrogance, and ſelf-opinion, muſt be ſenſible that, whether covered or not by poſitive law, in ſome way or other they are accountable even here for the abuſe of their truſt. If they are not cut off by a rebellion of their people, they may be ſtrangled by the very Janiſſaries kept for their

ſecurity againſt all other rebellion. Thus we have ſeen the king of France ſold by his ſoldiers for an encreaſe of pay. But where popular authority is abſolute and unreſtrained, the people have an infinitely greater, becauſe a far better founded confidence in their own power. They are themſelves, in a great meaſure, their own inſtruments. They are nearer to their objects. Beſides, they are leſs under reſponſibility to one of the greateſt controlling powers on earth, the ſenſe of fame and eſtimation. The ſhare of infamy that is likely to fall to the lot of each individual in public acts, is ſmall indeed; the operation of opinion being in the inverſe ratio to the number of thoſe who abuſe power. Their own approbation of their own acts has to them the appearance of a public judgment in their favour. A perfect democracy is therefore the moſt ſhameleſs thing in the world. As it is the moſt ſhameleſs, it is alſo the moſt fearleſs. No man apprehends in his perſon he can be made ſubject to puniſhment. Certainly the people at large never ought: for as all puniſhments are for example towards the conſervation of the people at large, the people at large can never become the ſubject of puniſhment by any human hand*. It is therefore of infinite importance that they ſhould not be ſuffered to imagine that their will, any more than that of kings, is the ſtandard of right and wrong. They ought to be perſuaded that they are full as little entitled, and far leſs qualified, with ſafety to themſelves, to uſe any arbitrary power whatſoever; that therefore they are not, under a falſe ſhew of liberty, but, in truth, to exerciſe an unnatural inverted domination, tyrannically to exact, from thoſe who officiate in the ſtate, not an entire devotion to their intereſt, which is their right, but an abject ſubmiſſion to their occa-

* Quicquid multis peccatur inultum.

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ſional will; extinguiſhing thereby, in all thoſe who ſerve them, all moral principle, all ſenſe of dignity, all uſe of judgment, and all conſiſtency of character, whilſt by the very ſame proceſs they give themſelves up a proper, a ſuitable, but a moſt contemptible prey to the ſervile ambition of popular ſycophants or courtly flatterers.

When the people have emptied themſelves of all the luſt of ſelfiſh will, which without religion it is utterly impoſſible they ever ſhould, when they are conſcious that they exerciſe, and exerciſe perhaps in an higher link of the order of delegation, the power, which to be legitimate muſt be according to that eternal immutable law, in which will and reaſon are the ſame, they will be more careful how they place power in baſe and incapable hands. In their nomination to office, they will not appoint to the exerciſe of authority, as to a pitiful job, but as to an holy function; not according to their ſordid ſelfiſh intereſt, nor to their wanton caprice, nor to their arbitrary will; but they will confer that power (which any man may well tremble to give or to receive) on thoſe only, in whom they may diſcern that predominant proportion of active virtue and wiſdom, taken together and fitted to the charge, ſuch, as in the great and inevitable mixed maſs of human imperfections and infirmities, is to be found.

When they are habitually convinced that no evil can be acceptable, either in the act or the permiſſion, to him whoſe eſſence is good, they will be better able to extirpate out of the minds of all magiſtrates, civil, eccleſiaſtical, or military, any thing that bears the leaſt reſemblance to a proud and lawleſs domination.

But one of the firſt and moſt leading principles on which the commonwealth and the laws are conſecrated, is leſt the temporary poſſeſſors and life-renters in it, unmindful of what

what they have received from their anceſtors, or of what is due to their poſterity, ſhould act as if they were the entire maſters; that they ſhould not think it amongſt their rights to cut off the entail, or commit waſte on the inheritance, by deſtroying at their pleaſure the whole original fabric of their ſociety; hazarding to leave to thoſe who come after them, a ruin inſtead of an habitation—and teaching theſe ſucceſſors as little to reſpect their contrivances, as they had themſelves reſpected the inſtitutions of their forefathers. By this unprincipled facility of changing the ſtate as often, and as much, and in as many ways as there are floating fancies or faſhions, the whole chain and continuity of the commonwealth would be broken. No one generation could link with the other. Men would become little better than the flies of a ſummer.

And firſt of all the ſcience of juriſprudence, the pride of the human intellect, which, with all its defects, redundancies, and errors, is the collected reaſon of ages, combining the principles of original juſtice with the infinite variety of human concerns, as a heap of old exploded errors, would be no longer ſtudied. Perſonal ſelf-ſufficiency and arrogance (the certain attendants upon all thoſe who have never experienced a wiſdom greater than their own) would uſurp the tribunal. Of courſe, no certain laws, eſtabliſhing invariable grounds of hope and fear, would keep the actions of men in a certain courſe, or direct them to a certain end. Nothing ſtable in the modes of holding property, or exerciſing function, could form a ſolid ground on which any parent could ſpeculate in the education of his offspring, or in a choice for their future eſtabliſhment in the world. No principles would be early worked into the habits. As ſoon as the moſt able inſtructor had completed his laborious courſe of inſtitution, inſtead of ſending forth his pupil, accompliſhed in a virtuous

virtuous diſcipline, fitted to procure him attention and reſpect, in his place in ſociety, he would find every thing altered; and that he had turned out a poor creature to the contempt and deriſion of the world, ignorant of the true grounds of eſtimation. Who would inſure a tender and delicate ſenſe of honour to beat almoſt with the firſt pulſes of the heart, when no man could know what would be the teſt of honour in a nation, continually varying the ſtandard of its coin? No part of life would retain its acquiſitions. Barbariſm with regard to ſcience and literature, unſkilfulneſs with regard to arts and manufactures, would infallibly ſucceed to the want of a ſteady education and ſettled principle; and thus the commonwealth itſelf would, in a few generations, crumble away, be diſconnected into the duſt and powder of individuality, and at length diſperſed to all the winds of heaven.

To avoid therefore the evils of inconſtancy and verſatility, ten thouſand times worſe than thoſe of obſtinacy and the blindeſt prejudice, we have conſecrated the ſtate, that no man ſhould approach to look into its defects or corruptions but with due caution; that he ſhould never dream of beginning its reformation by its ſubverſion; that he ſhould approach to the faults of the ſtate as to the wounds of a father, with pious awe and trembling ſollicitude. By this wiſe prejudice we are taught to look with horror on thoſe children of their country who are prompt raſhly to hack that aged parent in pieces, and put him into the kettle of magicians, in hopes that by their poiſonous weeds, and wild incantations, they may regenerate the paternal conſtitution, and renovate their father's life.

Society is indeed a contract. Subordinate contracts for objects of mere occaſional intereſt may be diſſolved at pleaſure—but the ſtate ought not to be conſidered as nothing

better

better than a partnerſhip agreement in a trade of pepper and coffee, callico or tobacco, or ſome other ſuch low concern, to be taken up for a little temporary intereſt, and to be diſſolved by the fancy of the parties. It is to be looked on with other reverence; becauſe it is not a partnerſhip in things ſubſervient only to the groſs animal exiſtence of a temporary and periſhable nature. It is a partnerſhip in all ſcience; a partnerſhip in all art; a partnerſhip in every virtue, and in all perfection. As the ends of ſuch a partnerſhip cannot be obtained in many generations, it becomes a partnerſhip not only between thoſe who are living, but between thoſe who are living, thoſe who are dead, and thoſe who are to be born. Each contract of each particular ſtate is but a clauſe in the great primæval contract of eternal ſociety, linking the lower with the higher natures, connecting the viſible and inviſible world, according to a fixed compact ſanctioned by the inviolable oath which holds all phyſical and all moral natures, each in their appointed place. This law is not ſubject to the will of thoſe, who by an obligation above them, and infinitely ſuperior, are bound to ſubmit their will to that law. The municipal corporations of that univerſal kingdom are not morally at liberty at their pleaſure, and on their ſpeculations of a contingent improvement, wholly to ſeparate and tear aſunder the bands of their ſubordinate community, and to diſſolve it into an unſocial, uncivil, unconnected chaos of elementary principles. It is the firſt and ſupreme neceſſity only, a neceſſity that is not choſen but chooſes, a neceſſity paramount to deliberation, that admits no diſcuſſion, and demands no evidence, which alone can juſtify a reſort to anarchy. This neceſſity is no exception to the rule; becauſe this neceſſity itſelf is a part too of that moral and phyſical diſpoſition of things to which man muſt be obedient by conſent or force; but if that

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which is only ſubmiſſion to neceſſity ſhould be made the object of choice, the law is broken, nature is diſobeyed, and the rebellious are outlawed, caſt forth, and exiled, from this world of reaſon, and order, and peace, and virtue, and fruitful penitence, into the antagoniſt world of madneſs, diſcord, vice, confuſion, and unavailing ſorrow.

Theſe, my dear Sir, are, were, and I think long will be the ſentiments of not the leaſt learned and reflecting part of this kingdom. They who are included in this deſcription, form their opinions on ſuch grounds as ſuch perſons ought to form them. The leſs enquiring receive them from an authority which thoſe whom Providence dooms to live on truſt need not be aſhamed to rely on. Theſe two ſorts of men move in the ſame direction, tho' in a different place. They both move with the order of the univerſe. They all know or feel this great antient truth: "Quod illi principi et præ-"potenti Deo qui omnem hunc mundum regit, nihil eorum "quæ quidem fiant in terris acceptius quam concilia et "cætus hominum jure ſociati quæ civitates appellantur." They take this tenet of the head and heart, not from the great name which it immediately bears, nor from the greater from whence it is derived; but from that which alone can give true weight and ſanction to any learned opinion, the common nature and common relation of men. Perſuaded that all things ought to be done with reference, and referring all to the point of reference to which all ſhould be directed, they think themſelves bound, not only as individuals in the ſanctuary of the heart, or as congregated in that perſonal capacity, to renew the memory of their high origin and caſt; but alſo in their corporate character to perform their national homage to the inſtitutor, and author and protector of civil ſociety; without which civil ſociety man could not by any poſſibility arrive at the perfection of

which his nature is capable, nor even make a remote and faint approach to it. They conceive that He who gave our nature to be perfected by our virtue, willed alſo the neceſſary means of its perfection—He willed therefore the ſtate—He willed its connexion with the ſource and original archetype of all perfection. They who are convinced of this his will, which is the law of laws and the ſovereign of ſovereigns, cannot think it reprehenſible, that this our corporate fealty and homage, that this our recognition of a ſigniory paramount, I had almoſt ſaid this oblation of the ſtate itſelf, as a worthy offering on the high altar of univerſal praiſe, ſhould be performed as all publick ſolemn acts are performed, in buildings, in muſick, in decoration, in ſpeech, in the dignity of perſons, according to the cuſtoms of mankind, taught by their nature; that is, with modeſt ſplendour, with unaſſuming ſtate, with mild majeſty and ſober pomp. For thoſe purpoſes they think ſome part of the wealth of the country is as uſefully employed as it can be, in fomenting the luxury of individuals. It is the publick ornament. It is the publick conſolation. It nouriſhes the publick hope. The pooreſt man finds his own importance and dignity in it, whilſt the wealth and pride of individuals at every moment makes the man of humble rank and fortune ſenſible of his inferiority, and degrades and vilifies his condition. It is for the man in humble life, and to raiſe his nature, and to put him in mind of a ſtate in which the privileges of opulence will ceaſe, when he will be equal by nature, and may be more than equal by virtue, that this portion of the general wealth of his country is employed and ſanctified.

I aſſure you I do not aim at ſingularity. I give you opinions which have been accepted amongſt us, from very early times to this moment, with a continued and general approbation, and which indeed are ſo worked into my mind, that I

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am unable to diſtinguiſh what I have learned from others from the reſults of my own meditation.

It is on ſome ſuch principles that the majority of the people of England, far from thinking a religious, national eſtabliſhment unlawful, hardly think it lawful to be without one. In France you are wholly miſtaken if you do not believe us above all other things attached to it, and beyond all other nations; and when this people has acted unwiſely and unjuſtifiably in its favour (as in ſome inſtances they have done moſt certainly) in their very errors you will at leaſt diſcover their zeal.

This principle runs through the whole ſyſtem of their polity. They do not conſider their church eſtabliſhment as convenient, but as eſſential to their ſtate; not as a thing heterogeneous and ſeparable; ſomething added for accommodation; what they may either keep up or lay aſide, according to their temporary ideas of convenience. They conſider it as the foundation of their whole conſtitution, with which, and with every part of which, it holds an indiſſoluble union. Church and ſtate are ideas inſeparable in their minds, and ſcarcely is the one ever mentioned without mentioning the other.

Our education is ſo formed as to confirm and fix this impreſſion. Our education is in a manner wholly in the hands of eccleſiaſtics, and in all ſtages from infancy to manhood. Even when our youth, leaving ſchools and univerſities, enter that moſt important period of life which begins to link experience and ſtudy together, and when with that view they viſit other countries, inſtead of old domeſtics whom we have ſeen as governors to principal men from other parts, three-fourths of thoſe who go abroad with our young nobility and gentlemen are eccleſiaſtics; not as auſtere maſters, nor as mere followers; but as friends and companions of a graver

character, and not ſeldom perſons as well born as themſelves. With them, as relations, they moſt commonly keep up a cloſe connexion through life. By this connexion we conceive that we attach our gentlemen to the church; and we liberalize the church by an intercourſe with the leading characters of the country.

So tenacious are we of the old eccleſiaſtical modes and faſhions of inſtitution, that very little alteration has been made in them ſince the fourteenth or fifteenth century; adhering in this particular, as in all things elſe, to our old ſettled maxim, never entirely nor at once to depart from antiquity. We found theſe old inſtitutions, on the whole, favourable to morality and diſcipline; and we thought they were ſuſceptible of amendment, without altering the ground. We thought that they were capable of receiving and meliorating, and above all of preſerving the acceſſions of ſcience and literature, as the order of Providence ſhould ſucceſſively produce them. And after all, with this Gothic and monkiſh education (for ſuch it is in the ground-work) we may put in our claim to as ample and as early a ſhare in all the improvements in ſcience, in arts, and in literature, which have illuminated and adorned the modern world, as any other nation in Europe; we think one main cauſe of this improvement was our not deſpiſing the patrimony of knowledge which was left us by our forefathers.

It is from our attachment to a church eſtabliſhment that the Engliſh nation did not think it wiſe to entruſt that great fundamental intereſt of the whole to what they truſt no part of their civil or military public ſervice, that is to the unſteady and precarious contribution of individuals. They go further. They certainly never have ſuffered and never will ſuffer the fixed eſtate of the church to be converted into a penſion, to depend on the treaſury, and to be delayed, withheld,

held, or perhaps to be extinguiſhed by fiſcal difficulties; which difficulties may ſometimes be pretended for political purpoſes, and are in fact often brought on by the extravagance, negligence, and rapacity of politicians. The people of England think that they have conſtitutional motives, as well as religious, againſt any project of turning their independent clergy into eccleſiaſtical penſioners of ſtate. They tremble for their liberty, from the influence of a clergy dependent on the crown; they tremble for the public tranquillity from the diſorders of a factious clergy, if it were made to depend upon any other than the crown. They therefore made their church, like their king and their nobility, independent.

From the united conſiderations of religion and conſtitutional policy, from their opinion of a duty to make a ſure proviſion for the conſolation of the feeble and the inſtruction of the ignorant, they have incorporated and identified the eſtate of the church with the maſs of *private property*, of which the ſtate is not the proprietor, either for uſe or dominion, but the guardian only and the regulator. They have ordained that the proviſion of this eſtabliſhment might be as ſtable as the earth on which it ſtands, and ſhould not fluctuate with the Euripus of funds and actions.

The men of England, the men, I mean, of light and leading in England, whoſe wiſdom (if they have any) is open and direct, would be aſhamed, as of a ſilly deceitful trick, to profeſs any religion in name, which by their proceedings they appeared to contemn. If by their conduct (the only language that rarely lies) they ſeemed to regard the great ruling principle of the moral and the natural world, as a mere invention to keep the vulgar in obedience, they apprehend that by ſuch a conduct they would defeat the politic purpoſe they have in view. They would find it difficult to make

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others to believe in a ſyſtem to which they manifeſtly gave no credit themſelves. The Chriſtian ſtateſmen of this land would indeed firſt provide for the *multitude*; becauſe it is the *multitude*; and is therefore, as ſuch, the firſt object in the eccleſiaſtical inſtitution, and in all inſtitutions. They have been taught, that the circumſtance of the goſpel's being preached to the poor, was one of the great teſts of its true miſſion. They think, therefore, that thoſe do not believe it, who do not take care it ſhould be preached to the poor. But as they know that charity is not confined to any one deſcription, but ought to apply itſelf to all men who have wants, they are not deprived of a due and anxious ſenſation of pity to the diſtreſſes of the miſerable great. They are not repelled through a faſtidious delicacy, at the ſtench of their arrogance and preſumption, from a medicinal attention to their mental blotches and running ſores. They are ſenſible, that religious inſtruction is of more conſequence to them than to any others; from the greatneſs of the temptation to which they are expoſed; from the important conſequences that attend their faults; from the contagion of their ill example; from the neceſſity of bowing down the ſtubborn neck of their pride and ambition to the yoke of moderation and virtue; from a conſideration of the fat ſtupidity and groſs ignorance concerning what imports men moſt to know, which prevails at courts, and at the head of armies, and in ſenates, as much as at the loom and in the field.

The Engliſh people are ſatisfied, that to the great the conſolations of religion are as neceſſary as its inſtructions. They too are among the unhappy. They feel perſonal pain and domeſtic ſorrow. In theſe they have no privilege, but are ſubject to pay their full contingent to the contributions levied on mortality. They want this ſovereign balm under their gnawing cares and anxieties, which being leſs converſant about

about the limited wants of animal life, range without limit, and are diverſified by infinite combinations in the wild and unbounded regions of imagination. Some charitable dole is wanting to theſe, our often very unhappy brethren, to fill the gloomy void that reigns in minds which have nothing on earth to hope or fear; ſomething to relieve in the killing languor and over-laboured laſſitude of thoſe who have nothing to do; ſomething to excite an appetite to exiſtence in the palled ſatiety which attends on all pleaſures which may be bought, where nature is not left to her own proceſs, where even deſire is anticipated, and therefore fruition defeated by meditated ſchemes and contrivances of delight; and no interval, no obſtacle, is interpoſed between the wiſh and the accompliſhment.

The people of England know how little influence the teachers of religion are likely to have with the wealthy and powerful of long ſtanding, and how much leſs with the newly fortunate, if they appear in a manner no way aſſorted to thoſe with whom they muſt aſſociate, and over whom they muſt even exerciſe, in ſome caſes, ſomething like an authority. What muſt they think of that body of teachers, if they ſee it in no part above the eſtabliſhment of their domeſtic ſervants? If the poverty were voluntary, there might be ſome difference. Strong inſtances of ſelf-denial operate powerfully on our minds; and a man who has no wants has obtained great freedom and firmneſs, and even dignity. But as the maſs of any deſcription of men are but men, and their poverty cannot be voluntary, that diſreſpect which attends upon all lay poverty, will not depart from the eccleſiaſtical. Our provident conſtitution has therefore taken care that thoſe who are to inſtruct preſumptuous ignorance, thoſe who are to be cenſors over inſolent vice, ſhould neither incur their contempt, nor live upon their alms; nor will it tempt the

rich to a neglect of the true medicine of their minds. For theſe reaſons, whilſt we provide firſt for the poor, and with a parental ſolicitude, we have not relegated religion (like ſomething we were aſhamed to ſhew) to obſcure municipalities or ruſtic villages. No! we will have her to exalt her mitred front in courts and parliaments. We will have her mixed throughout the whole maſs of life, and blended with all the claſſes of ſociety. The people of England will ſhew to the haughty potentates of the world, and to their talking ſophiſters, that a free, a generous, an informed nation, honours the high magiſtrates of its church; that it will not ſuffer the inſolence of wealth and titles, or any other ſpecies of proud pretenſion, to look down with ſcorn upon what they look up to with reverence; nor preſume to trample on that acquired perſonal nobility, which they intend always to be, and which often is the fruit, not the reward, (for what can be the reward?) of learning, piety, and virtue. They can ſee, without pain or grudging, an archbiſhop precede a duke. They can ſee a biſhop of Durham, or a biſhop of Wincheſter, in poſſeſſion of ten thouſand pounds a year; and cannot conceive why it is in worſe hands than eſtates to the like amount in the hands of this earl, or that ſquire; although it may be true, that ſo many dogs and horſes are not kept by the former, and fed with the victuals which ought to nouriſh the children of the people. It is true, the whole church revenue is not always employed, and to every ſhilling, in charity; nor perhaps ought it; but ſomething is generally ſo employed. It is better to cheriſh virtue and humanity, by leaving much to free will, even with ſome loſs to the object, than to attempt to make men mere machines and inſtruments of a political benevolence. The world on the whole will gain by a liberty, without which virtue cannot exiſt.

When once the commonwealth has eſtabliſhed the eſtates

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of the church as property, it can, conſiſtently, hear nothing of the more or the leſs. Too much and too little are treaſon againſt property. What evil can ariſe from the quantity in any hand, whilſt the ſupreme authority has the full, ſovereign ſuperintendance over this, as over all property, to prevent every ſpecies of abuſe; and, whenever it notably deviates, to give to it a direction agreeable to the purpoſes of its inſtitution.

In England moſt of us conceive that it is envy and malignity towards thoſe who are often the beginners of their own fortune, and not a love of the ſelf-denial and mortification of the antient church, that makes ſome look aſkance at the diſtinctions, and honours, and revenues, which, taken from no perſon, are ſet apart for virtue. The ears of the people of England are diſtinguiſhing. They hear theſe men ſpeak broad. Their tongue betrays them. Their language is in the *patois* of fraud; in the cant and gibberiſh of hypocriſy. The people of England muſt think ſo, when theſe praters affect to carry back the clergy to that primitive evangelic poverty which, in the ſpirit, ought always to exiſt in them, (and in us too, however we may like it) but in the thing muſt be varied, when the relation of that body to the ſtate is altered; when manners, when modes of life, when indeed the whole order of human affairs has undergone a total revolution. We ſhall believe thoſe reformers to be then honeſt enthuſiaſts, not as now we think them, cheats and deceivers, when we ſee them throwing their own goods into common, and ſubmitting their own perſons to the auſtere diſcipline of the early church.

With theſe ideas rooted in their minds, the commons of Great Britain, in the national emergencies, will never ſeek their reſource from the confiſcation of the eſtates of the church and poor. Sacrilege and proſcription are not among the

ways and means in our committee of ſupply. The Jews in Change Alley have not yet dared to hint their hopes of a mortgage on the revenues belonging to the ſee of Canterbury. I am not afraid that I ſhall be diſavowed, when I aſſure you that there is not *one* public man in this kingdom, whom you would wiſh to quote; no not one of any party or deſcription, who does not reprobate the diſhoneſt, perfidious, and cruel confiſcation which the national aſſembly has been compelled to make of that property which it was their firſt duty to protect.

It is with the exultation of a little national pride I tell you, that thoſe amongſt us who have wiſhed to pledge the ſocieties of Paris in the cup of their abominations, have been diſappointed. The robbery of your church has proved a ſecurity to the poſſeſſions of ours. It has rouſed the people. They ſee with horror and alarm that enormous and ſhameleſs act of proſcription. It has opened, and will more and more open their eyes upon the ſelfiſh enlargement of mind, and the narrow liberality of ſentiment of inſidious men, which commencing in cloſe hypocriſy and fraud have ended in open violence and rapine. At home we behold ſimilar beginnings. We are on our guard againſt ſimilar concluſions.

I hope we ſhall never be ſo totally loſt to all ſenſe of the duties impoſed upon us by the law of ſocial union, as, upon any pretext of public ſervice, to confiſcate the goods of a ſingle unoffending citizen. Who but a tyrant (a name expreſſive of every thing which can vitiate and degrade human nature) could think of ſeizing on the property of men, unaccuſed, unheard, untried, by whole deſcriptions, by hundreds and thouſands together? who that had not loſt every trace of humanity could think of caſting down men of exalted rank and ſacred function, ſome of them of an age to

call at once for reverence and compaſſion, of caſting them down from the higheſt ſituation in the commonwealth, wherein they were maintained by their own landed property, to a ſtate of indigence, depreſſion, and contempt?

The confiſcators truly have made ſome allowance to their victims from the ſcraps and fragments of their own tables from which they have been ſo harſhly driven, and which have been ſo bountifully ſpread for a feaſt to the harpies of uſury. But to drive men from independence to live on alms is itſelf great cruelty. That which might be a tolerable condition to men in one ſtate of life, and not habituated to other things, may, when all theſe circumſtances are altered, be a dreadful revolution; and one to which a virtuous mind would feel pain in condemning any guilt except that which would demand the life of the offender. But to many minds this puniſhment of *degradation* and *infamy* is worſe than death. Undoubtedly it is an infinite aggravation of this cruel ſuffering, that the perſons who were taught a double prejudice in favour of religion, by education, and by the place they held in the adminiſtration of its functions, are to receive the remnants of their property as alms from the profane and impious hands of thoſe who had plundered them of all the reſt; to receive (if they are at all to receive) not from the charitable contributions of the faithful, but from the inſolent tenderneſs of known and avowed Atheiſm, the maintenance of religion, meaſured out to them on the ſtandard of the contempt in which it is held; and for the purpoſe of rendering thoſe who receive the allowance vile and of no eſtimation in the eyes of mankind.

But this act of ſeizure of property, it ſeems, is a judgment in law, and not a confiſcation. They have, it ſeems, found out in the academies of the *Palais Royale*, and the *Jacobins*, that certain men had no right to the poſſeſſions which they

held under law, uſage, the deciſions of courts, and the accumulated preſcription of a thouſand years. They ſay that eccleſiaſtics are fictitious perſons, creatures of the ſtate; whom at pleaſure they may deſtroy, and of courſe limit and modify in every particular; that the goods they poſſeſs are not properly theirs, but belong to the ſtate which created the fiction; and we are therefore not to trouble ourſelves with what they may ſuffer in their natural feelings and natural perſons, on account of what is done towards them in this their conſtructive character. Of what import is it, under what names you injure men, and deprive them of the juſt emoluments of a profeſſion, in which they were not only permitted but encouraged by the ſtate to engage; and upon the ſuppoſed certainty of which emoluments they had formed the plan of their lives, contracted debts, and led multitudes to an entire dependence upon them?

You do not imagine, Sir, that I am going to compliment this miſerable diſtinction of perſons with any long diſcuſſion. The arguments of tyranny are as contemptible as its force is dreadful. Had not your confiſcators by their early crimes obtained a power which ſecures indemnity to all the crimes of which they have ſince been guilty, or that they can commit, it is not the ſyllogiſm of the logician but the laſh of the executioner that would have refuted a ſophiſtry which becomes an accomplice of theft and murder. The ſophiſtick tyrants of Paris are loud in their declamations againſt the departed regal tyrants who in former ages have vexed the world. They are thus bold, becauſe they are ſafe from the dungeons and iron cages of their old maſters. Shall we be more tender of the tyrants of our own time, when we ſee them acting worſe tragedies under our eyes? ſhall we not uſe the ſame liberty that they do, when we can uſe it with the ſame ſafety? when to ſpeak honeſt truth only requires

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a contempt of the opinions of thoſe whoſe actions we abhor?

This outrage on all the rights of property was at firſt covered with what, on the ſyſtem of their conduct, was the moſt aſtoniſhing of all pretexts—a regard to national faith. The enemies to property at firſt pretended a moſt tender, delicate, and ſcrupulous anxiety for keeping the king's engagements with the public creditor. Theſe profeſſors of the rights of men are ſo buſy in teaching others, that they have not leiſure to learn any thing themſelves; otherwiſe they would have known that it is to the property of the citizen, and not to the demands of the creditor of the ſtate, that the firſt and original faith of civil ſociety is pledged. The claim of the citizen is prior in time, paramount in title, ſuperior in equity. The fortunes of individuals, whether poſſeſſed by acquiſition, or by deſcent, or in virtue of a participation in the goods of ſome community, were no part of the creditor's ſecurity, expreſſed or implied. They never ſo much as entered into his head when he made his bargain. He well knew that the public, whether repreſented by a monarch, or by a ſenate, can pledge nothing but the public eſtate; and it can have no public eſtate, except in what it derives from a juſt and proportioned impoſition upon the citizens at large. This was engaged, and nothing elſe could be engaged to the public creditor. No man can mortgage his injuſtice as a pawn for his fidelity.

It is impoſſible to avoid ſome obſervation on the contradictions cauſed by the extreme rigour and the extreme laxity of the new public faith, which influenced in this tranſaction, and which influenced not according to the nature of the obligation, but to the deſcription of the perſons to whom it was engaged. No acts of the old government of the kings of France are held valid in the national aſſembly, except its pecuniary

pecuniary engagements; acts of all others of the moſt ambiguous legality. The reſt of the acts of that royal government are conſidered in ſo odious a light, that to have a claim under its authority is looked on as a ſort of crime. A penſion, given as a reward for ſervice to the ſtate, is ſurely as good a ground of property as any ſecurity for money advanced to the ſtate. It is a better; for money is paid, and well paid, to obtain that ſervice. We have however ſeen multitudes of people under this deſcription in France, who never had been deprived of their allowances by the moſt arbitrary miniſters, in the moſt arbitrary times, by this aſſembly of the rights of men, robbed without mercy. They were told, in anſwer to their claim to the bread earned with their blood, that their ſervices had not been rendered to the country that now exiſts.

This laxity of public faith is not confined to thoſe unfortunate perſons. The aſſembly, with perfect conſiſtency it muſt be owned, is engaged in a reſpectable deliberation how far it is bound by the treaties made with other nations under the former government, and their committee is to report which of them they ought to ratify, and which not. By this means they have put the external fidelity of this virgin ſtate on a par with its internal.

It is not eaſy to conceive upon what rational principle the royal government ſhould not, of the two, rather have poſſeſſed the power of rewarding ſervice, and making treaties, in virtue of its prerogative, than that of pledging to creditors the revenue of the ſtate actual and poſſible. The treaſure of the nation, of all things, has been the leaſt allowed to the prerogative of the king of France, or to the prerogative of any king in Europe. To mortgage the public revenue implies the ſovereign dominion, in the fulleſt ſenſe, over the public purſe. It goes far beyond the truſt even of a temporary and occaſional taxation. The acts however of that

that dangerous power (the diſtinctive mark of a boundleſs deſpotiſm) have been alone held ſacred. Whence aroſe this preference given by a democratic aſſembly to a body of property deriving its title from the moſt critical and obnoxious of all the exertions of monarchical authority? Reaſon can furniſh nothing to reconcile inconſiſtency; nor can partial favour be accounted for upon equitable principles. But the contradiction and partiality which admit no juſtification, are not the leſs without an adequate cauſe; and that cauſe I do not think it difficult to diſcover.

By the vaſt debt of France a great monied intereſt had inſenſibly grown up, and with it a great power. By the antient uſages which prevailed in that kingdom, the general circulation of property, and in particular the mutual convertibility of land into money, and of money into land, had always been a matter of difficulty. Family ſettlements, rather more general and more ſtrict than they are in England, the *jus retractus*, the great maſs of landed property held by the crown, and by a maxim of the French law held unalienably, the vaſt eſtates of the eccleſiaſtic corporations, —all theſe had kept the landed and monied intereſts more ſeparated in France, leſs miſcible, and the owners of the two diſtinct ſpecies of property not ſo well diſpoſed to each other as they are in this country.

The monied property was long looked on with rather an evil eye by the people. They ſaw it connected with their diſtreſſes, and aggravating them. It was no leſs envied by the old landed intereſts, partly for the ſame reaſons that rendered it obnoxious to the people, but much more ſo as it eclipſed, by the ſplendour of an oſtentatious luxury, the unendowed pedigrees and naked titles of ſeveral among the nobility. Even when the nobility, which repreſented the more permanent landed intereſt, united themſelves by marriage

riage (which ſometimes was the caſe) with the other deſcription, the wealth which ſaved the family from ruin, was ſuppoſed to contaminate and degrade it. Thus the enmities and heart-burnings of theſe parties were encreaſed even by the uſual means by which diſcord is made to ceaſe, and quarrels are turned into friendſhip. In the mean time, the pride of the wealthy men, not noble or newly noble, encreaſed with its cauſe. They felt with reſentment an inferiority, the grounds of which they did not acknowledge. There was no meaſure to which they were not willing to lend themſelves, in order to be revenged of the outrages of this rival pride, and to exalt their wealth to what they conſidered as its natural rank and eſtimation. They ſtruck at the nobility through the crown and the church. They attacked them particularly on the ſide on which they thought them the moſt vulnerable, that is, the poſſeſſions of the church, which, through the patronage of the crown, generally devolved upon the nobility. The biſhopricks, and the great commendatory abbies, were, with few exceptions, held by that order.

In this ſtate of real, though not always perceived warfare between the noble antient landed intereſt, and the new monied intereſt, the greateſt becauſe the moſt applicable ſtrength was in the hands of the latter. The monied intereſt is in its nature more ready for any adventure; and its poſſeſſors more diſpoſed to new enterprizes of any kind. Being of a recent acquiſition, it falls in more naturally with any novelties. It is therefore the kind of wealth which will be reſorted to by all who wiſh for change.

Along with the monied intereſt, a new deſcription of men had grown up, with whom that intereſt ſoon formed a cloſe and marked union; I mean the political men of letters. Men of letters, fond of diſtinguiſhing themſelves, are rarely averſe

averſe to innovation. Since the decline of the life and greatneſs of Lewis the XIVth, they were not ſo much cultivated either by him, or by the regent, or the ſucceſſors to the crown; nor were they engaged to the court by favours and emoluments ſo ſyſtematically as during the ſplendid period of that oſtentatious and not impolitic reign. What they loſt in the old court protection, they endeavoured to make up by joining in a ſort of incorporation of their own; to which the two academies of France, and afterwards the vaſt undertaking of the Encyclopædia, carried on by a ſociety of theſe gentlemen, did not a little contribute.

The literary cabal had ſome years ago formed ſomething like a regular plan for the deſtruction of the Chriſtian religion. This object they purſued with a degree of zeal which hitherto had been diſcovered only in the propagators of ſome ſyſtem of piety. They were poſſeſſed with a ſpirit of proſelytiſm in the moſt fanatical degree; and from thence, by an eaſy progreſs, with the ſpirit of perſecution according to their means. What was not to be done towards their great end by any direct or immediate act, might be wrought by a longer proceſs through the medium of opinion. To command that opinion, the firſt ſtep is to eſtabliſh a dominion over thoſe who direct it. They contrived to poſſeſs themſelves, with great method and perſeverance, of all the avenues to literary fame. Many of them indeed ſtood high in the ranks of literature and ſcience. The world had done them juſtice; and in favour of general talents forgave the evil tendency of their peculiar principles. This was true liberality; which they returned by endeavouring to confine the reputation of ſenſe, learning, and taſte to themſelves or their followers. I will venture to ſay that this narrow, excluſive ſpirit has not been leſs prejudicial to literature and to taſte, than to morals and true philoſophy. Theſe Athe-

ſtical fathers have a bigotry of their own; and they have learnt to talk againſt monks with the ſpirit of a monk. But in ſome things they are men of the world. The reſources of intrigue are called in to ſupply the defects of argument and wit. To this ſyſtem of literary monopoly was joined an unremitting induſtry to blacken and diſcredit in every way, and by every means, all thoſe who did not hold to their faction. To thoſe who have obſerved the ſpirit of their conduct, it has long been clear that nothing was wanted but the power of carrying the intolerance of the tongue and of the pen into a perſecution which would ſtrike at property, liberty, and life.

The deſultory and faint perſecution carried on againſt them, more from compliance with form and decency than with ſerious reſentment, neither weakened their ſtrength, nor relaxed their efforts. The iſſue of the whole was, that what with oppoſition, and what with ſucceſs, a violent and malignant zeal, of a kind hitherto unknown in the world, had taken an entire poſſeſſion of their minds, and rendered their whole converſation, which otherwiſe would have been pleaſing and inſtructive, perfectly diſguſting. A ſpirit of cabal, intrigue, and proſelytiſm, pervaded all their thoughts, words, and actions. And, as controverſial zeal ſoon turns its thoughts on force, they began to inſinuate themſelves into a correſpondence with foreign princes; in hopes, through their authority, which at firſt they flattered, they might bring about the changes they had in view. To them it was indifferent whether theſe changes were to be accompliſhed by the thunderbolt of deſpotiſm, or by the earthquake of popular commotion. The correſpondence between this cabal, and the late king of Pruſſia, will throw no ſmall light upon the ſpirit of all their proceedings*. For the ſame purpoſe for which they in-

* I do not chuſe to ſhock the feeling of the moral reader with any quotation of their vulgar, baſe, and profane language.

trigued

trigued with princes, they cultivated, in a diſtinguiſhed manner, the monied intereſt of France; and partly through the means furniſhed by thoſe whoſe peculiar offices gave them the moſt extenſive and certain means of communication, they carefully occupied all the avenues to opinion.

Writers, eſpecially when they act in a body, and with one direction, have great influence on the publick mind; the alliance therefore of theſe writers with the monied intereſt had no ſmall effect in removing the popular odium and envy which attended that ſpecies of wealth. Theſe writers, like the propagators of all novelties, pretended to a great zeal for the poor, and the lower orders, whilſt in their ſatires they rendered hateful, by every exaggeration, the faults of courts, of nobility, and of prieſthood. They became a ſort of demagogues. They ſerved as a link to unite, in favour of one object, obnoxious wealth to reſtleſs and deſperate poverty.

As theſe two kinds of men appear principal leaders in all the late tranſactions, their junction and politics will ſerve to account, not upon any principles of law or of policy, but as a *cauſe*, for the general fury with which all the landed property of eccleſiaſtical corporations has been attacked; and the great care which, contrary to their pretended principles, has been taken, of a monied intereſt originating from the authority of the crown. All the envy againſt wealth and power, was artificially directed againſt other deſcriptions of riches. On what other principle than that which I have ſtated can we account for an appearance ſo extraordinary and unnatural as that of the eccleſiaſtical poſſeſſions, which had ſtood ſo many ſucceſſions of ages and ſhocks of civil violences, and were guarded at once by juſtice, and by prejudice, being applied to the payment of debts, comparatively recent, invidious, and contracted by a decried and ſubverted government.

Was the public eſtate a ſufficient ſtake for the public

debts? Aſſume that it was not, and that a loſs *muſt* be incurred ſomewhere—When the only eſtate lawfully poſſeſſed, and which the contracting parties had in contemplation at the time in which their bargain was made, happens to fail, who, according to the principles of natural and legal equity, ought to be the ſufferer? Certainly it ought to be either the party who truſted; or the party who perſuaded him to truſt; or both; and not third parties who had no concern with the tranſaction. Upon any inſolvency they ought to ſuffer who were weak enough to lend upon bad ſecurity, or they who fraudulently held out a ſecurity that was not valid. Laws are acquainted with no other rules of deciſion. But by the new inſtitute of the rights of men, the only perſons, who in equity ought to ſuffer, are the only perſons who are to be ſaved harmleſs: thoſe are to anſwer the debt who neither were lenders or borrowers, mortgagers or mortgagees.

What had the clergy to do with theſe tranſactions? What had they to do with any publick engagement further than the extent of their own debt? To that, to be ſure, their eſtates were bound to the laſt acre. Nothing can lead more to the true ſpirit of the aſſembly, which fits for public confiſcation, with its new equity and its new morality, than an attention to their proceeding with regard to this debt of the clergy. The body of confiſcators, true to that monied intereſt for which they were falſe to every other, have found the clergy competent to incur a legal debt. Of courſe they declared them legally entitled to the property which their power of incurring the debt and mortgaging the eſtate implied; recognizing the rights of thoſe perſecuted citizens, in the very act in which they were thus groſsly violated.

If, as I ſaid, any perſons are to make good deficiencies to the public creditor, beſides the public at large, they muſt be

be thoſe who managed the agreement. Why therefore are not the eſtates of all the comptrollers general confiſcated? Why not thoſe of the long ſucceſſion of miniſters, financiers, and bankers who have been enriched whilſt the nation was impoveriſhed by their dealings and their counſels? Why is not the eſtate of Mr. Laborde declared forfeited rather than of the archbiſhop of Paris, who has had nothing to do in the creation or in the jobbing of the public funds? Or, if you muſt confiſcate old landed eſtates in favour of the money-jobbers, why is the penalty confined to one deſcription? I do not know whether the expences of the duke de Choiſeul have left any thing of the infinite ſums which he had derived from the bounty of his maſter, during the tranſactions of a reign which contributed largely, by every ſpecies of prodigality in war and peace, to the preſent debt of France. If any ſuch remains, why is not this confiſcated? I remember to have been in Paris during the time of the old government. I was there juſt after the duke d'Aiguillon had been ſnatched (as it was generally thought) from the block by the hand of a protecting deſpotiſm. He was a miniſter, and had ſome concern in the affairs of that prodigal period. Why do I not ſee his eſtate delivered up to the municipalities in which it is ſituated. The noble family of Noailles have long been ſervants, (meritorious ſervants I admit) to the crown of France, and have had of courſe ſome ſhare in its bounties. Why do I hear nothing of the application of their eſtates to the public debt? Why is the eſtate of the duke de Rochefoucault more ſacred than that of the cardinal de Rochefoucault? The former is, I doubt not, a worthy perſon; and (if it were not a ſort of profaneneſs to talk of the uſe, as affecting the title to property) he makes a good uſe of his revenues; but it is no diſreſpect to him to ſay, what authentic information well warrants me in ſaying, that the uſe made of a property

equally

equally valid, by his brother the cardinal archbiſhop of Rouen, was far more laudable and far more public-ſpirited. Can one hear of the proſcription of ſuch perſons, and the confiſcation of their effects, without indignation and horror? He is not a man who does not feel ſuch emotions on ſuch occaſions. He does not deſerve the name of a free man who will not expreſs them.

Few barbarous conquerers have ever made ſo terrible a revolution in property. None of the heads of the Roman factions, when they eſtabliſhed "*crudelem illam haſtam*" in all their auctions of rapine, have ever ſet up to ſale the goods of the conquered citizen to ſuch an enormous amount. It muſt be allowed in favour of thoſe tyrants of antiquity, that what was done by them could hardly be ſaid to be done in cold blood. Their paſſions were inflamed, their tempers ſoured, their underſtandings confuſed, with the ſpirit of revenge, with the innumerable reciprocated and recent inflictions and retaliations of blood and rapine. They were driven beyond all bounds of moderation by the apprehenſion of the return of power with the return of property to the families of thoſe they had injured beyond all hope of forgiveneſs.

Theſe Roman confiſcators, who were yet only in the elements of tyranny, and were not inſtructed in the rights of men to exerciſe all ſorts of cruelties on each other without provocation, thought it neceſſary to ſpread a ſort of colour over their injuſtice. They conſidered the vanquiſhed party as compoſed of traitors who had borne arms, or otherwiſe had acted with hoſtility againſt the commonwealth. They regarded them as perſons who had forfeited their property by their crimes. With you, in your improved ſtate of the human mind, there was no ſuch formality. You ſeized upon five millions ſterling of annual rent, and turned forty or fifty thouſand human creatures out of their houſes, becauſe "ſuch

"was

"was your pleaſure." The tyrant Harry the Eighth of England, as he was not better enlightened than the Roman Marius's and Sylla's, and had not ſtudied in your new ſchools, did not know what an effectual inſtrument of deſpotiſm was to be found in that grand magazine of offenſive weapons, the rights of men. When he reſolved to rob the abbies, as the club of the Jacobins have robbed all the eccleſiaſtics, he began by ſetting on foot a commiſſion to examine into the crimes and abuſes which prevailed in thoſe communities. As it might be expected, his commiſſion reported truths, exaggerations, and falſhoods. But truly or falſely it reported abuſes and offences. However, as abuſes might be corrected, as every crime of perſons does not infer a forfeiture with regard to communities, and as property, in that dark age, was not diſcovered to be a creature of prejudice, all thoſe abuſes (and there were enough of them) were hardly thought ſufficient ground for ſuch a confiſcation as it was for his purpoſes to make. He therefore procured the formal ſurrender of theſe eſtates. All theſe operoſe proceedings were adopted by one of the moſt decided tyrants in the rolls of hiſtory, as neceſſary preliminaries, before he could venture, by bribing the members of his two ſervile houſes with a ſhare of the ſpoil, and holding out to them an eternal immunity from taxation, to demand a confirmation of his iniquitous proceedings by an act of parliament. Had fate reſerved him to our times, four technical terms would have done his buſineſs, and ſaved him all this trouble; he needed nothing more than one ſhort form of incantation—"*Philoſophy, Light, Liberality,* "*the Rights of Men.*"

I can ſay nothing in praiſe of thoſe acts of tyranny, which no voice has hitherto ever commended under any of their falſe colours; yet in theſe falſe colours an homage was paid by deſpotiſm to juſtice. The power which was above all

fear and all remorſe was not ſet above all ſhame. Whilſt ſhame keeps its watch, virtue is not wholly extinguiſhed in the heart; nor will moderation be utterly exiled from the minds of tyrants.

I believe every honeſt man ſympathizes in his reflections with our political poet on that occaſion, and will pray to avert the omen whenever theſe acts of rapacious deſpotiſm preſent themſelves to his view or his imagination:

——— "*May no ſuch ſtorm*
"*Fall on our times, where ruin muſt reform.*
"*Tell me (my muſe) what monſtrous, dire offence,*
"*What crimes could any Chriſtian king incenſe*
"*To ſuch a rage? Was 't luxury, or luſt?*
"*Was* he *ſo temperate, ſo chaſte, ſo juſt?*
"*Were theſe their crimes? they were his own much more;*
"*But wealth is crime enough to him that's poor* *."

This

* The reſt of the paſſage is this——

"Who having ſpent the treaſures of his crown,
"Condemns their luxury to feed his own.
"And yet this act, to varniſh o'er the ſhame
"Of ſacrilege, muſt bear devotion's name.
"No crime ſo bold, but would be underſtood
"A real, or at leaſt a ſeeming good,
"Who fears not to do ill, yet fears the name;
"And, free from conſcience, is a ſlave to fame.
"Thus he the church at once protects, and ſpoils:
"But princes' ſwords are ſharper than their ſtyles.
"And thus to th' ages paſt he makes amends,
"Their charity deſtroys, their faith defends.
"Then did religion in a lazy cell,
"In empty aëry contemplations dwell;
"And, like the block, unmoved lay: but ours,
"As much too active, like the ſtork devours.

"Is

This ſame wealth, which is at all times treaſon and *leſe nation* to indigent and rapacious deſpotiſm, under all modes of polity, was your temptation to violate property, law, and religion, united in one object. But was the ſtate of France ſo wretched and undone, that no other reſource but rapine remained to preſerve its exiſtence? On this point I wiſh to receive ſome information. When the ſtates met, was the condition of the finances of France ſuch, that, after œconomiſing on principles of juſtice and mercy through all departments, no fair repartition of burthens upon all the orders could poſſibly reſtore them? If ſuch an equal impoſition would have been ſufficient, you well know it might eaſily have been made. Mr. Necker, in the budget which he laid before the orders aſſembled at Verſailles, made a detailed expoſition of the ſtate of the French nation *.

" Is there no temp'rate region can be known,
" Betwixt their frigid, and our torrid zone?
" Could we not wake from that lethargic dream,
" But to be reſtleſs in a worſe extreme?
" And for that lethargy was there no cure,
" But to be caſt into a calenture?
" Can knowledge have no bound, but muſt advance
" So far, to make us wiſh for ignorance?
" And rather in the dark to grope our way,
" Than, led by a falſe guide, to err by day?
" Who ſees theſe diſmal heaps, but would demand,
" What barbarous invader ſack'd the land?
" But when he hears, no Goth, no Turk did bring
" This deſolation, but a Chriſtian king;
" When nothing, but the name of zeal, appears
" 'Twixt our beſt actions, and the worſt of theirs,
" What does he think our ſacrilege would ſpare,
" When ſuch th' effects of our devotion are?"

COOPER'S HILL, by Sir JOHN DENHAM.

* Rapport de Monſ. le Directeur général des finances, fait par ordre du Roi à Verſailles. Mai 5, 1789.

If we give credit to him, it was not neceſſary to have recourſe to any new impoſitions whatſoever, to put the receipts of France on a balance with its expences. He ſtated the permanent charges of all deſcriptions, including the intereſt of a new loan of four hundred millions, at 531,444,000 livres; the fixed revenue at 475,294,000, making the deficiency 56,150,000, or ſhort of 2,200,000 ſterling. But to balance it, he brought forward ſavings and improvements of revenue (conſidered as entirely certain) to rather more than the amount of that deficiency; and he concludes with theſe emphatical words (p. 39) "Quel pays, Meſſieurs, que "celui, ou, *ſans impots* et avec de ſimples objets *inappercus*, "on peut faire diſparoitre un deficit qui a fait tant de bruit "en Europe." As to the re-imburſement, the ſinking of debt, and the other great objects of public credit and political arrangement indicated in Monſ. Necker's ſpeech, no doubt could be entertained, but that a very moderate and proportioned aſſeſſment on the citizens without diſtinction would have provided for all of them to the fulleſt extent of their demand.

If this repreſentation of Monſ. Necker was falſe, then the aſſembly are in the higheſt degree culpable for having forced the king to accept as his miniſter, and ſince the king's depoſition, for having employed as *their* miniſter, a man who had been capable of abuſing ſo notoriouſly the confidence of his maſter and their own; in a matter too of the higheſt moment, and directly appertaining to his particular office. But if the repreſentation was exact (as, having always, along with you, conceived a high degree of reſpect for Mr. Necker, I make no doubt it was) then what can be ſaid in favour of thoſe, who, inſtead of moderate, reaſonable, and general contribution, have in cold blood, and impelled by no neceſſity, had recourſe to a partial and cruel confiſcation?

Was that contribution refuſed on a pretext of privilege, either on the part of the clergy or on that of the nobility? No certainly. As to the clergy, they even ran before the wiſhes of the third order. Previous to the meeting of the ſtates, they had in all their inſtructions expreſsly directed their deputies to renounce every immunity, which put them upon a footing diſtinct from the condition of their fellow-ſubjects. In this renunciation the clergy were even more explicit than the nobility.

But let us ſuppoſe that the deficiency had remained at the 56 millions, (or £. 2,200,000 ſterling) as at firſt ſtated by Mr. Necker. Let us allow that all the reſources he oppoſed to that deficiency were impudent and groundleſs fictions; and that the aſſembly (or their lords of articles * at the Jacobins) were from thence juſtified in laying the whole burden of that deficiency on the clergy,—yet allowing all this, a neceſſity of £. 2,200,000 ſterling will not ſupport a confiſcation to the amount of five millions. The impoſition of £. 2,200,000 on the clergy, as partial, would have been oppreſſive and unjuſt, but it would not have been altogether ruinous to thoſe on whom it was impoſed; and therefore it would not have anſwered the real purpoſe of the managers.

Perhaps perſons, unacquainted with the ſtate of France, on hearing the clergy and the nobleſſe were privileged in point of taxation, may be led to imagine, that previous to the revolution theſe bodies had contributed nothing to the ſtate. This is a great miſtake. They certainly did not contribute equally with each other, nor either of them equally with the commons. They both however contributed largely. Neither nobility nor clergy enjoyed any exemption from the

* In the conſtitution of Scotland during the Stuart reigns, a committee ſat for preparing bills; and none could paſs, but thoſe previouſly approved by them. This committee was called lords of articles.

exciſe on conſumable commodities, from duties of cuſtom, or from any of the other numerous *indirect* impoſitions, which in France, as well as here, make ſo very large a proportion of all payments to the public. The nobleſſe paid the capitation. They paid alſo a land tax, called the twentieth penny, to the height ſometimes of three, ſometimes of four ſhillings in the pound; both of them *direct* impoſitions of no light nature, and no trivial produce. The clergy of the provinces annexed by conqueſt to France (which in extent make about an eighth part of the whole but in wealth a much larger proportion) paid likewiſe to the capitation and the twentieth penny, at the rate paid by the nobility. The clergy in the old provinces did not pay the capitation; but they had redeemed themſelves at the expence of about 24 millions, or a little more than a million ſterling. They were exempted from the twentieths; but then they made free gifts; they contracted debts for the ſtate; and they were ſubject to ſome other charges, the whole computed at about a thirteenth part of their clear income. They ought to have paid annually about forty thouſand pounds more, to put them on a par with the contribution of the nobility.

When the terrors of this tremendous proſcription hung over the clergy, they made an offer of a contribution, through the archbiſhop of Aix, which, for its extravagance, ought not to have been accepted. But it was evidently and obviouſly more advantageous to the public creditor, than any thing which could rationally be promiſed by the confiſcation. Why was it not accepted? The reaſon is plain—There was no deſire that the church ſhould be brought to ſerve the ſtate. The ſervice of the ſtate was made a pretext to deſtroy the church. In their way to the deſtruction of the church they would not ſcruple to deſtroy their country: and they have deſtroyed it. One great end in the project would have been

been defeated, if the plan of extortion had been adopted in lieu of the ſcheme of confiſcation. The new landed intereſt connected with the new republic, and connected with it for its very being, could not have been created. This was among the reaſons why that extravagant ranſom was not accepted.

The madneſs of the project of confiſcation, on the plan that was firſt pretended, ſoon became apparent. To bring this unwieldy maſs of landed property, enlarged by the confiſcation of all the vaſt landed domain of the crown, at once into market, was obviouſly to defeat the profits propoſed by the confiſcation, by depreciating the value of thoſe lands, and indeed of all the landed eſtates throughout France. Such a ſudden diverſion of all its circulating money from trade to land, muſt be an additional miſchief. What ſtep was taken? Did the aſſembly, on becoming ſenſible of the inevitable ill effects of their projected ſale, revert to the offers of the clergy? No diſtreſs could oblige them to travel in a courſe which was diſgraced by any appearance of juſtice. Giving over all hopes from a general immediate ſale, another project ſeems to have ſucceeded. They propoſed to take ſtock in exchange for the church lands. In that project great difficulties aroſe in equalizing the objects to be exchanged. Other obſtacles alſo preſented themſelves, which threw them back again upon ſome project of ſale. The municipalities had taken an alarm. They would not hear of transferring the whole plunder of the kingdom to the ſtock-holders in Paris. Many of thoſe municipalities had been (upon ſyſtem) reduced to the moſt deplorable indigence. Money was no where to be ſeen. They were therefore led to the point that was ſo ardently deſired. They panted for a currency of any kind which might revive their periſhing induſtry. The municipalities were then to be admitted to a ſhare in the ſpoil,

which

which evidently rendered the firſt ſcheme (if ever it had been ſeriouſly entertained) altogether impracticable. Public exigencies preſſed upon all ſides. The miniſter of finance reiterated his call for ſupply with a moſt urgent, anxious, and boding voice. Thus preſſed on all ſides, inſtead of the firſt plan of converting their bankers into biſhops and abbots, inſtead of paying the old debt, they contracted a new debt, at 3 per cent. creating a new paper currency, founded on an eventual ſale of the church lands. They iſſued this paper currency to ſatisfy in the firſt inſtance chiefly the demands made upon them by the *Bank of diſcount*, the great machine, or paper-mill, of their fictitious wealth.

The ſpoil of the church was now become the only reſource of all their operations in finance; the vital principle of all their politics; the ſole ſecurity for the exiſtence of their power. It was neceſſary by all, even the moſt violent means, to put every individual on the ſame bottom, and to bind the nation in one guilty intereſt to uphold this act, and the authority of thoſe by whom it was done. In order to force the moſt reluctant into a participation of their pillage, they rendered their paper circulation compulſory in all payments. Thoſe who conſider the general tendency of their ſchemes to this one object as a centre, and a centre from which afterwards all their meaſures radiate, will not think that I dwell too long upon this part of the proceedings of the national aſſembly.

To cut off all appearance of connection between the crown and public juſtice, and to bring the whole under implicit obedience to the dictators in Paris, the old independent judicature of the parliaments, with all its merits, and all its faults, was wholly aboliſhed. Whilſt the parliaments exiſted, it was evident that the people might ſome time or other come to reſort to them, and rally under the

the ſtandard of their antient laws. It became however a matter of conſideration that the magiſtrates and officers, in the courts now aboliſhed, *had purchaſed their places* at a very high rate, for which, as well as for the duty they performed, they received but a very low return of intereſt. Simple confiſcation is a boon only for the clergy;—to the lawyers ſome appearances of equity are to be obſerved; and they are to receive compenſation to an immenſe amount. Their compenſation becomes part of the national debt, for the liquidation of which there is the one exhauſtleſs fund. The lawyers are to obtain their compenſation in the new church paper, which is to march with the new principles of judicature and legiſlature. The diſmiſſed magiſtrates are to take their ſhare of martyrdom with the eccleſiaſtics, or to receive their own property from ſuch a fund and in ſuch a manner, as all thoſe, who have been ſeaſoned with the antient principles of juriſprudence, and had been the ſworn guardians of property, muſt look upon with horror. Even the clergy are to receive their miſerable allowance out of the depreciated paper which is ſtamped with the indelible character of ſacrilege, and with the ſymbols of their own ruin, or they muſt ſtarve. So violent an outrage upon credit, property, and liberty, as this compulſory paper currency, has ſeldom been exhibited by the alliance of bankruptcy and tyranny, at any time, or in any nation.

In the courſe of all theſe operations, at length comes out the grand *arcanum*;—that in reality, and in a fair ſenſe, the lands of the church (ſo far as any thing certain can be gathered from their proceedings) are not to be ſold at all. By the late reſolutions of the national aſſembly, they are indeed to be delivered to the higheſt bidder. But it is to be obſerved, that *a certain portion only of the purchaſe money is to be laid down.* A period of twelve years is to be given for the

payment of the reſt. The philoſophic purchaſers are therefore, on payment of a ſort of fine, to be put inſtantly into poſſeſſion of the eſtate. It becomes in ſome reſpects a ſort of gift to them; to be held on the feudal tenure of zeal to the new eſtabliſhment. This project is evidently to let in a body of purchaſers without money. The conſequence will be, that theſe purchaſers, or rather grantees, will pay, not only from the rents as they accrue, which might as well be received by the ſtate, but from the ſpoil of the materials of buildings, from waſte in woods, and from whatever money, by hands habituated to the gripings of uſury, they can wring from the miſerable peaſant. He is to be delivered over to the mercenary and arbitrary diſcretion of men, who will be ſtimulated to every ſpecies of extortion by the growing demands on the growing profits of an eſtate held under the precarious ſettlement of a new political ſyſtem.

When all the frauds, impoſtures, violences, rapines, burnings, murders, confiſcations, compulſory paper currencies, and every deſcription of tyranny and cruelty employed to bring about and to uphold this revolution, have their natural effect, that is, to ſhock the moral ſentiments of all virtuous and ſober minds, the abettors of this philoſophic ſyſtem immediately ſtrain their throats in a declamation againſt the old monarchical government of France. When they have rendered that depoſed power ſufficiently black, they then proceed in argument, as if all thoſe who diſapprove of their new abuſes, muſt of courſe be partizans of the old; that thoſe who reprobate their crude and violent ſchemes of liberty ought to be treated as advocates for ſervitude. I admit that their neceſſities do compel them to this baſe and contemptible fraud. Nothing can reconcile men to their proceedings and projects but the ſuppoſition that there is no third option between them, and ſome tyranny as odious as

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can be furniſhed by the records of hiſtory, or by the invention of poets. This prattling of theirs hardly deſerves the name of ſophiſtry. It is nothing but plain impudence. Have theſe gentlemen never heard, in the whole circle of the worlds of theory and practice, of any thing between the deſpotiſm of the monarch and the deſpotiſm of the multitude? Have they never heard of a monarchy directed by laws, controlled and balanced by the great hereditary wealth and hereditary dignity of a nation; and both again controlled by a judicious check from the reaſon and feeling of the people at large acting by a ſuitable and permanent organ? Is it then impoſſible that a man may be found who, without criminal ill intention, or pitiable abſurdity, ſhall prefer ſuch a mixed and tempered government to either of the extremes; and who may repute that nation to be deſtitute of all wiſdom and of all virtue, which, having in its choice to obtain ſuch a government with eaſe, *or rather to confirm it when actually poſſeſſed*, thought proper to commit a thouſand crimes, and to ſubject their country to a thouſand evils, in order to avoid it? Is it then a truth ſo univerſally acknowledged, that a pure democracy is the only tolerable form into which human ſociety can be thrown, that a man is not permitted to heſitate about its merits, without the ſuſpicion of being a friend to tyranny, that is, of being a foe to mankind?

I do not know under what deſcription to claſs the preſent ruling authority in France. It affects to be a pure democracy, though I think it in a direct train of becoming ſhortly a miſchievous and ignoble oligarchy. But for the preſent I admit it to be a contrivance of the nature and effect of what it pretends to. I reprobate no form of government merely upon abſtract principles. There may be ſituations in which the purely democratic form will become neceſſary. There may be ſome (very few, and very particularly circumſtanced) where it

would be clearly deſirable. This I do not take to be the caſe of France, or of any other great country. Until now, we have ſeen no examples of conſiderable democracies. The antients were better acquainted with them. Not being wholly unread in the authors, who had ſeen the moſt of thoſe conſtitutions, and who beſt underſtood them, I cannot help concurring with their opinion, that an abſolute democracy, no more than abſolute monarchy, is to be reckoned among the legitimate forms of government. They think it rather the corruption and degeneracy, than the ſound conſtitution of a republic. If I recollect rightly, Ariſtotle obſerves, that a democracy has many ſtriking points of reſemblance with a tyranny *. Of this I am certain, that in a democracy, the majority of the citizens is capable of exerciſing the moſt cruel oppreſſions upon the minority, whenever ſtrong diviſions prevail in that kind of polity, as they often muſt; and that oppreſſion of the minority will extend to far greater numbers, and will be carried on with much greater fury, than can almoſt ever be apprehended from the dominion of a ſingle ſceptre. In ſuch a popular perſecution, individual ſufferers are in a much more deplorable condition than in any other. Under a cruel prince they have the balmy compaſſion of mankind to aſſuage the ſmart of their wounds;

* When I wrote this I quoted from memory, after many years had elapſed from my reading the paſſage. A learned friend has found it, and it is as follows:

Τὸ ἦθος τὸ αὐτὸ, καὶ ἄμφω δεσποτικὰ τῶν βελτιόνων, καὶ τὰ ψηφίσματα, ὥσπερ ἐκεῖ τὰ ἐπιταγμάτα· καὶ ὁ δημαγωγὸς καὶ ὁ κόλαξ, οἱ αὐτοὶ καὶ ἀνάλογον· καὶ μάλιστα ἑκάτεροι παρ' ἑκατέροις ἰσχύουσιν, οἱ μὲν κόλακες παρὰ τυράννοις, οἱ δὲ δημαγωγοὶ παρὰ τοῖς δήμοις τοῖς τοιούτοις.——

'The ethical character is the ſame; both exerciſe deſpotiſm over the better claſs of citizens; and decrees are in the one, what ordinances and arrêts are in the other: the demagogue too, and the court favourite, are not unfrequently the ſame identical men, and always bear a cloſe analogy; and theſe have the principal power, each in their reſpective forms of government, favourites with the abſolute monarch, and demagogues with a people ſuch as I have deſcribed.' Ariſt. Politic. lib. iv. cap. 4.

they have the plaudits of the people to animate their generous conſtancy under their ſufferings: but thoſe who are ſubjected to wrong under multitudes, are deprived of all external conſolation. They ſeem deſerted by mankind; overpowered by a conſpiracy of their whole ſpecies.

But admitting democracy not to have that inevitable tendency to party tyranny, which I ſuppoſe it to have, and admitting it to poſſeſs as much good in it when unmixed, as I am ſure it poſſeſſes when compounded with other forms; does monarchy, on its part, contain nothing at all to recommend it? I do not often quote Bolingbroke, nor have his works in general, left any permanent impreſſion on my mind. He is a preſumptuous and a ſuperficial writer. But he has one obſervation, which, in my opinion, is not without depth and ſolidity. He ſays, that he prefers a monarchy to other governments; becauſe you can better ingraft any deſcription of republic on a monarchy than any thing of monarchy upon the republican forms. I think him perfectly in the right. The fact is ſo hiſtorically; and it agrees well with the ſpeculation.

I know how eaſy a topic it is to dwell on the faults of departed greatneſs. By a revolution in the ſtate, the fawning ſycophant of yeſterday, is converted into the auſtere critic of the preſent hour. But ſteady independant minds, when they have an object of ſo ſerious a concern to mankind as government, under their contemplation, will diſdain to aſſume the part of ſatiriſts and declaimers. They will judge of human inſtitutions as they do of human characters. They will ſort out the good from the evil, which is mixed in mortal inſtitutions as it is in mortal men.

Your government in France, though uſually, and I think juſtly, reputed the beſt of the unqualified or ill-qualified monarchies, was ſtill full of abuſes. Theſe abuſes accumu-

lated in a length of time, as they muſt accumulate in every monarchy not under the conſtant inſpection of a popular repreſentative. I am no ſtranger to the faults and defects of the ſubverted government of France; and I think I am not inclined by nature or policy to make a panegyric upon any thing which is a juſt and natural object of cenſure. But the queſtion is not now of the vices of that monarchy, but of its exiſtence. Is it then true, that the French government was ſuch as to be incapable or undeſerving of reform; ſo that it was of abſolute neceſſity the whole fabric ſhould be at once pulled down, and the area cleared for the erection of a theoretic experimental edifice in its place? All France was of a different opinion in the beginning of the year 1789. The inſtructions to the repreſentatives to the ſtates-general, from every diſtrict in that kingdom, were filled with projects for the reformation of that government, without the remoteſt ſuggeſtion of a deſign to deſtroy it. Had ſuch a deſign been then even inſinuated, I believe there would have been but one voice, and that voice for rejecting it with ſcorn and horror. Men have been ſometimes led by degrees, ſometimes hurried into things, of which, if they could have ſeen the whole together, they never would have permitted the moſt remote approach. When thoſe inſtructions were given, there was no queſtion but that abuſes exiſted, and that they demanded a reform; nor is there now. In the interval between the inſtructions and the revolution, things changed their ſhape; and in conſequence of that change, the true queſtion at preſent is, Whether thoſe who would have reformed, or thoſe who have deſtroyed, are in the right?

To hear ſome men ſpeak of the late monarchy of France, you would imagine that they were talking of Perſia bleeding under the ferocious ſword of Tæhmas Kouli Khân; or at leaſt deſcribing

deſcribing the barbarous anarchic deſpotiſm of Turkey, where the fineſt countries in the moſt genial climates in the world are waſted by peace more than any countries have been worried by war; where arts are unknown, where manufactures languiſh, where ſcience is extinguiſhed, where agriculture decays, where the human race itſelf melts away and periſhes under the eye of the obſerver. Was this the caſe of France? I have no way of determining the queſtion but by a reference to facts. Facts do not ſupport this reſemblance. Along with much evil, there is ſome good in monarchy itſelf; and ſome corrective to its evil, from religion, from laws, from manners, from opinions, the French monarchy muſt have received; which rendered it (though by no means a free, and therefore by no means a good conſtitution) a deſpotiſm rather in appearance than in reality.

Among the ſtandards upon which the effects of government on any country are to be eſtimated, I muſt conſider the ſtate of its population as not the leaſt certain. No country in which population flouriſhes, and is in progreſſive improvement, can be under a *very* miſchievous government. About ſixty years ago, the Intendants of the generalities of France made, with other matters, a report of the population of their ſeveral diſtricts. I have not the books, which are very voluminous, by me, nor do I know where to procure them (I am obliged to ſpeak by memory, and therefore the leſs poſitively) but I think the population of France was by them, even at that period, eſtimated at twenty-two millions of ſouls. At the end of the laſt century it had been generally calculated at eighteen. On either of theſe eſtimations France was not ill-peopled. Mr. Necker who is an authority for his own time at leaſt equal to the Intendants for theirs, reckons, and upon apparently ſure principles, the people of France, in the year 1780, at twenty-four millions

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ſix hundred and ſeventy-thouſand. But was this the probable ultimate term under the old eſtabliſhment? Dr. Price is of opinion, that the growth of population in France was by no means at its *acmé* in that year. I certainly defer to Dr. Price's authority a good deal more in theſe ſpeculations, than I do in his general politics. This gentleman, taking ground on Mr. Necker's data, is very confident, that ſince the period of that miniſter's calculation, the French population has encreaſed rapidly; ſo rapidly that in the year 1789 he will not conſent to rate the people of that kingdom at a lower number than thirty millions. After abating much (and much I think ought to be abated) from the ſanguine calculation of Dr. Price, I have no doubt that the population of France did encreaſe conſiderably during this later period: but ſuppoſing that it encreaſed to nothing more than will be ſufficient to complete the 24,670,000 to 25 millions, ſtill a population of 25 millions, and that in an encreaſing progreſs, on a ſpace of about twenty-ſeven thouſand ſquare leagues, is immenſe. It is, for inſtance, a good deal more than the proportionable population of this iſland, or even than that of England, the beſt-peopled part of the united kingdom.

It is not univerſally true, that France is a fertile country. Conſiderable tracts of it are barren, and labour under other natural diſadvantages. In the portions of that territory, where things are more favourable, as far as I am able to diſcover, the numbers of the people correſpond to the indulgence of nature *. The Generality of Liſle (this I admit is the ſtrongeſt example) upon an extent of 404 ½ leagues, about ten years ago, contained 734,600 ſouls, which is 1772 inhabitants to each ſquare league. The middle term for the

* De l'Adminiſtration des Finances de la France, par Monſ. Necker, vol. i. p. 288.

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reſt of France is about 900 inhabitants to the ſame admeaſurement.

I do not attribute this population to the depoſed government; becauſe I do not like to compliment the contrivances of men, with what is due in a great degree to the bounty of Providence. But that decried government could not have obſtructed, moſt probably it favoured, the operation of thoſe cauſes (whatever they were) whether of nature in the ſoil, or in habits of induſtry among the people, which has produced ſo large a number of the ſpecies throughout that whole kingdom, and exhibited in ſome particular places ſuch prodigies of population. I never will ſuppoſe that fabrick of a ſtate to be the worſt of all political inſtitutions, which, by experience, is found to contain a principle favourable (however latent it may be) to the encreaſe of mankind.

The wealth of a country is another, and no contemptible ſtandard, by which we may judge whether, on the whole, a government be protecting or deſtructive. France far exceeds England in the multitude of her people; but I apprehend that her comparative wealth is much inferior to ours; that it is not ſo equal in the diſtribution, nor ſo ready in the circulation. I believe the difference in the form of the two governments to be amongſt the cauſes of this advantage on the ſide of England. I ſpeak of England, not of the whole Britiſh dominions; which, if compared with thoſe of France, will, in ſome degree, weaken the comparative rate of wealth upon our ſide. But that wealth, which will not endure a compariſon with the riches of England, may conſtitute a very reſpectable degree of opulence. Mr. Necker's book publiſhed in 1785*, contains an accurate and intereſting col-

* De l'Adminiſtration des Finances de la France, par M. Necker.

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lection of facts relative to public œconomy and to political arithmetic; and his ſpeculations on the ſubject are in general wiſe and liberal. In that work he gives an idea of the ſtate of France, very remote from the portrait of a country whoſe government was a perfect grievance, an abſolute evil, admitting no cure but through the violent and uncertain remedy of a total revolution. He affirms, that from the year 1726 to the year 1784, there was coined at the mint of France, in the ſpecies of gold and ſilver, to the amount of about one hundred millions of pounds ſterling *.

It is impoſſible that Mr. Necker ſhould be miſtaken in the amount of the bullion which has been coined in the mint. It is a matter of official record. The reaſonings of this able financier, concerning the quantity of gold and ſilver which remained for circulation, when he wrote in 1785, that is about four years before the depoſition and impriſonment of the French king, are not of equal certainty; but they are laid on grounds ſo apparently ſolid, that it is not eaſy to refuſe a conſiderable degree of aſſent to his calculation. He calculates the *numeraire*, or what we call *ſpecie*, then actually exiſting in France, at about eighty-eight millions of the ſame Engliſh money. A great accumulation of wealth for one country, large as that country is! Mr. Necker was ſo far from conſidering this influx of wealth as likely to ceaſe, when he wrote in 1785, that he preſumes upon a future annual increaſe of two per cent. upon the money brought into France during the periods from which he computed.

Some adequate cauſe muſt have originally introduced all the money coined at its mint into that kingdom; and ſome cauſe as operative muſt have kept at home, or returned into its boſom, ſuch a vaſt flood of treaſure as Mr. Necker cal-

* Vol. iii. chap. 8. and chap. 9.

culates

culates to remain for domeſtic circulation. Suppoſe any reaſonable deductions from M. Necker's computation; the remainder muſt ſtill amount to an immenſe ſum. Cauſes thus powerful to acquire and to retain, cannot be found in diſcouraged induſtry, inſecure property, and a poſitively deſtructive government. Indeed, when I conſider the face of the kingdom of France; the multitude and opulence of her cities; the uſeful magnificence of her ſpacious high roads and bridges; the opportunity of her artificial canals and navigations opening the conveniences of maritime communication through a ſolid continent of ſo immenſe an extent; when I turn my eyes to the ſtupendous works of her ports and harbours, and to her whole naval apparatus, whether for war or trade; when I bring before my view the number of her fortifications, conſtructed with ſo bold and maſterly a ſkill, and made and maintained at ſo prodigious a charge, preſenting an armed front and impenetrable barrier to her enemies upon every ſide; when I recollect how very ſmall a part of that extenſive region is without cultivation, and to what complete perfection the culture of many of the beſt productions of the earth have been brought in France; when I reflect on the excellence of her manufactures and fabrics, ſecond to none but ours, and in ſome particulars not ſecond; when I contemplate the grand foundations of charity, public and private; when I ſurvey the ſtate of all the arts that beautify and poliſh life; when I reckon the men ſhe has bred for extending her fame in war, her able ſtateſmen, the multitude of her profound lawyers and theologians, her philoſophers, her critics, her hiſtorians and antiquaries, her poets, and her orators, ſacred and profane, I behold in all this ſomething which awes and commands the imagination, which checks the mind on the brink of precipitate and indiſcriminate cenſure, and which demands, that

we ſhould very ſeriouſly examine, what and how great are the latent vices that could authoriſe us at once to level ſo ſpacious a fabric with the ground. I do not recognize, in this view of things, the deſpotiſm of Turkey. Nor do I diſcern the character of a government, that has been, on the whole, ſo oppreſſive, or ſo corrupt, or ſo negligent, as to be utterly unfit *for all reformation*. I muſt think ſuch a government well deſerved to have its excellencies heightened; its faults corrected; and its capacities improved into a Britiſh conſtitution.

Whoever has examined into the proceedings of that depoſed government for ſeveral years back, cannot fail to have obſerved, amidſt the inconſtancy and fluctuation natural to courts, an earneſt endeavour towards the proſperity and improvement of the country; he muſt admit, that it had long been employed, in ſome inſtances, wholly to remove, in many conſiderably to correct, the abuſive practices and uſages that had prevailed in the ſtate; and that even the unlimited power of the ſovereign over the perſons of his ſubjects, inconſiſtent, as undoubtedly it was, with law and liberty, had yet been every day growing more mitigated in the exerciſe. So far from refuſing itſelf to reformation, that government was open, with a cenſurable degree of facility, to all ſorts of projects and projectors on the ſubject. Rather too much countenance was given to the ſpirit of innovation, which ſoon was turned againſt thoſe who foſtered it, and ended in their ruin. It is but cold, and no very flattering juſtice to that fallen monarchy, to ſay, that, for many years, it treſpaſſed more by levity and want of judgment in ſeveral of its ſchemes, than from any defect in diligence or in public ſpirit. To compare the government of France for the laſt fifteen or ſixteen years with wiſe and well-conſtituted eſtabliſhments, during that, or during any period, is not to act

with fairneſs. But if in point of prodigality in the expenditure of money, or in point of rigour in the exerciſe of power, it be compared with any of the former reigns, I believe candid judges will give little credit to the good intentions of thoſe who dwell perpetually on the donations to favourites, or on the expences of the court, or on the horrors of the Baſtile in the reign of Louis the XVIth *.

Whether the ſyſtem, if it deſerves ſuch a name, now built on the ruins of that antient monarchy, will be able to give a better account of the population and wealth of the country, which it has taken under its care, is a matter very doubtful. Inſtead of improving by the change, I apprehend that a long ſeries of years muſt be told before it can recover in any degree the effects of this philoſophic revolution, and before the nation can be replaced on its former footing. If Dr. Price ſhould think fit, a few years hence, to favour us with an eſtimate of the population of France, he will hardly be able to make up his tale of thirty millions of ſouls, as computed in 1789, or the aſſembly's computation of twenty-ſix millions of that year; or even Mr. Necker's twenty-five millions in 1780. I hear that there are conſiderable emigrations from France; and that many quitting that voluptuous climate, and that ſeductive *Circean* liberty, have taken refuge in the frozen regions, and under the Britiſh deſpotiſm, of Canada.

In the preſent diſappearance of coin, no perſon could think it the ſame country, in which the preſent miniſter of the finances has been able to diſcover fourſcore millions ſterling in ſpecie. From its general aſpect one would conclude that

* The world is obliged to Mr. de Calonne for the pains he has taken to refute the ſcandalous exaggerations relative to ſome of the royal expences, and to detect the fallacious account given of penſions, for the wicked purpoſe of provoking the populace to all ſorts of crimes.

it had been for ſome time paſt under the ſpecial direction of the learned academicians of Laputa and Balnibarbi *. Already the population of Paris has ſo declined, that Mr. Necker ſtated to the national aſſembly the proviſion to be made for its ſubſiſtence at a fifth leſs than what had formerly been found requiſite †. It is ſaid (and I have never heard it contradicted) that an hundred thouſand people are out of employment in that city, though it is become the ſeat of the impriſoned court and national aſſembly. Nothing, I am credibly informed, can exceed the ſhocking and diſguſting ſpectacle of mendicancy diſplayed in that capital. Indeed, the votes of the national aſſembly leave no doubt of the fact. They have lately appointed a ſtanding committee of mendicancy. They are contriving at once a vigorous police on this ſubject, and, for the firſt time, the impoſition of a tax to maintain the poor, for whoſe preſent relief great ſums appear on the face of the public accounts of the year ‡. In the mean time, the leaders of the legiſlative clubs and coffee-

* See Gulliver's Travels for the idea of countries governed by philoſophers.

† Mr. de Calonne ſtates the falling off of the population of Paris as far more conſiderable; and it may be ſo, ſince the period of Mr. Necker's calculation.

‡ Travaux de charité pour ſubvenir au manque de travail à Paris et dans les provinces —	Liv. 3,866,920	St[s]	£. 161,121	s. 13	d. 4
Deſtruction de vagbondage et de la mendicité —	1,671,417	—	69,642	7	6
Primes pour l'importation de grains — —	5,671,907	—	236,329	9	2
Dépenſes relatives aux ſubſiſtances, deduction fait des récouvremens qui ont eu lieu — —	39,871,790	—	1,661,324	11	8
Total — Liv.	51,082,034	St[s]	2,128,418	1	8

When I ſent this book to the preſs, I entertained ſome doubt concerning the nature and extent of the laſt article in the above accounts, which is only under a general head, without any detail. Since then I have ſeen M. de Calonne's work. I muſt think it a great loſs to me that I had not that advantage earlier. M. de Calonne thinks this article to be on account of

coffee-houſes are intoxicated with admiration at their own wiſdom and ability. They ſpeak with the moſt ſovereign contempt of the reſt of the world. They tell the people, to comfort them in the rags with which they have cloathed them, that they are a nation of philoſophers; and, ſometimes, by all the arts of quackiſh parade, by ſhew, tumult, and buſtle, ſometimes by the alarms of plots and invaſions, they attempt to drown the cries of indigence, and to divert the eyes of the obſerver from the ruin and wretchedneſs of the ſtate. A brave people will certainly prefer liberty, accompanied with a virtuous poverty, to a depraved and wealthy ſervitude. But before the price of comfort and opulence is paid, one ought to be pretty ſure it is real liberty which is purchaſed, and that ſhe is to be purchaſed at no other price. I ſhall always, however, conſider that liberty as very equivocal in her appearance, which has not wiſdom and juſtice for her companions; and does not lead proſperity and plenty in her train.

The advocates for this revolution, not ſatisfied with exaggerating the vices of their antient government, ſtrike at the fame of their country itſelf, by painting almoſt all that could have attracted the attention of ſtrangers, I mean their nobility and their clergy, as objects of horror. If this were only a libel, there had not been much in it. But it has practical conſequences. Had your nobility and gentry, who formed the great body of your landed men, and the whole of your military officers, reſembled thoſe of Germany, at the period

of general ſubſiſtence: but as he is not able to comprehend how ſo great a loſs as upwards of £. 1,661,000 ſterling could be ſuſtained on the difference between the price and the ſale of grain, he ſeems to attribute this enormous head of charge to ſecret expences of the revolution. I cannot ſay any thing poſitively on that ſubject. The reader is capable of judging, by the aggregate of theſe immenſe charges, on the ſtate and condition of France; and the ſyſtem of publick œconomy adopted in that nation. Theſe articles of account produced no enquiry or diſcuſſion in the national aſſembly.

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when the Hanſe-towns were neceſſitated to confederate againſt the nobles in defence of their property—had they been like the *Orſini* and *Vitelli* in Italy, who uſed to ſally from their fortified dens to rob the trader and traveller—had they been ſuch as the *Mamalukes* in Egypt, or the *Nayres* on the coaſt of Malabar, I do admit, that too critical an enquiry might not be adviſeable into the means of freeing the world from ſuch a nuiſance. The ſtatues of Equity and Mercy might be veiled for a moment. The tendereſt minds, confounded with the dreadful exigence in which morality ſubmits to the ſuſpenſion of its own rules in favour of its own principles, might turn aſide whilſt fraud and violence were accompliſhing the deſtruction of a pretended nobility which diſgraced whilſt it perſecuted human nature. The perſons moſt abhorrent from blood, and treaſon, and arbitrary confiſcation, might remain ſilent ſpectators of this civil war between the vices.

But did the privileged nobility who met under the king's precept at Verſailles, in 1789, or their conſtituents, deſerve to be looked on as the *Nayres* or *Mamalukes* of this age, or as the *Orſini* and *Vitelli* of antient times? If I had then aſked the queſtion, I ſhould have paſſed for a madman. What have they ſince done that they were to be driven into exile, that their perſons ſhould be hunted about, mangled, and tortured, their families diſperſed, their houſes laid in aſhes, that their order ſhould be aboliſhed, and the memory of it, if poſſible, extinguiſhed, by ordaining them to change the very names by which they were uſually known? Read their inſtructions to their repreſentatives. They breathe the ſpirit of liberty as warmly, and they recommend reformation as ſtrongly, as any other order. Their privileges relative to contribution were voluntarily ſurrendered; as the king, from the beginning, ſurrendered all pretence to a right of taxation. Upon a free

free conſtitution there was but one opinion in France. The abſolute monarchy was at an end. It breathed its laſt, without a groan, without ſtruggle, without convulſion. All the ſtruggle, all the diſſenſion aroſe afterwards upon the preference of a deſpotic democracy to a government of reciprocal controul. The triumph of the victorious party was over the principles of a Britiſh conſtitution.

I have obſerved the affectation, which, for many years paſt, has prevailed in Paris even to a degree perfectly childiſh, of idolizing the memory of your Henry the Fourth. If any thing could put one out of humour with that ornament to the kingly character, it would be this overdone ſtyle of inſidious panegyric. The perſons who have worked this engine the moſt buſily, are thoſe who have ended their panegyrics in dethroning his ſucceſſor and deſcendant; a man, as good-natured at the leaſt, as Henry the Fourth; altogether as fond of his people; and who has done infinitely more to correct the antient vices of the ſtate than that great monarch did, or we are ſure he ever meant to do. Well it is for his panegyriſts that they have not him to deal with. For Henry of Navarre was a reſolute, active, and politic prince. He poſſeſſed indeed great humanity and mildneſs; but an humanity and mildneſs that never ſtood in the way of his intereſts. He never ſought to be loved without putting himſelf firſt in a condition to be feared. He uſed ſoft language with determined conduct. He aſſerted and maintained his authority in the groſs, and diſtributed his acts of conceſſion only in the detail. He ſpent the income of his prerogatives nobly; but he took care not to break in upon the capital; never abandoning for a moment any of the claims, which he made under the fundamental laws, nor ſparing to ſhed the blood of thoſe who oppoſed him, often in the field, ſometimes upon the ſcaffold. Becauſe he knew how

how to make his virtues reſpected by the ungrateful, he has merited the praiſes of thoſe whom, if they had lived in his time, he would have ſhut up in the Baſtile, and brought to puniſhment along with the regicides whom he hanged after he had famiſhed Paris into a ſurrender.

If theſe panegyriſts are in earneſt in their admiration of Henry the Fourth, they muſt remember, that they cannot think more highly of him, than he did of the nobleſſe of France; whoſe virtue, honour, courage, patriotiſm, and loyalty were his conſtant theme.

But the nobility of France are degenerated ſince the days of Henry the Fourth.—This is poſſible. But it is more than I can believe to be true in any great degree. I do not pretend to know France as correctly as ſome others; but I have endeavoured through my whole life to make myſelf acquainted with human nature: otherwiſe I ſhould be unfit to take even my humble part in the ſervice of mankind. In that ſtudy I could not paſs by a vaſt portion of our nature, as it appeared modified in a country but twenty-four miles from the ſhore of this iſland. On my beſt obſervation, compared with my beſt enquiries, I found your nobility for the greater part compoſed of men of an high ſpirit, and of a delicate ſenſe of honour, both with regard to themſelves individually, and with regard to their whole corps, over whom they kept, beyond what is common in other countries, a cenſorial eye. They were tolerably well-bred; very officious, humane, and hoſpitable; in their converſation frank and open; with a good military tone; and reaſonably tinctured with literature, particularly of the authors in their own language. Many had pretenſions far above this deſcription. I ſpeak of thoſe who were generally met with.

As to their behaviour to the inferior claſſes, they appeared to me to comport themſelves towards them with good-nature,

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and with ſomething more nearly approaching to familiarity, than is generally practiſed with us in the intercourſe between the higher and lower ranks of life. To ſtrike any perſon, even in the moſt abject condition, was a thing in a manner unknown, and would be highly diſgraceful. Inſtances of other ill-treatment of the humble part of the community were rare; and as to attacks made upon the property or the perſonal liberty of the commons, I never heard of any whatſoever from *them*; nor, whilſt the laws were in vigour under the antient government, would ſuch tyranny in ſubjects have been permitted. As men of landed eſtates, I had no fault to find with their conduct, though much to reprehend, and much to wiſh changed, in many of the old tenures. Where the letting of their land was by rent, I could not diſcover that their agreements with their farmers were oppreſſive; nor when they were in partnerſhip with the farmer, as often was the caſe, have I heard that they had taken the lion's ſhare. The proportions ſeemed not inequitable. There might be exceptions; but certainly they were exceptions only. I have no reaſon to believe that in theſe reſpects the landed nobleſſe of France were worſe than the landed gentry of this country; certainly in no reſpect more vexatious than the landholders, not noble, of their own nation. In cities the nobility had no manner of power; in the country very little. You know, Sir, that much of the civil government, and the police in the moſt eſſential parts, was not in the hands of that nobility which preſents itſelf firſt to our conſideration. The revenue, the ſyſtem and collection of which were the moſt grievous parts of the French government, was not adminiſtered by the men of the ſword; nor were they anſwerable for the vices of its principle, or the vexations, where any ſuch exiſted, in its management.

Denying, as I am well warranted to do, that the nobility had any conſiderable ſhare in the oppreſſion of the people, in caſes in which real oppreſſion exiſted, I am ready to admit that they were not without conſiderable faults and errors. A fooliſh imitation of the worſt part of the manners of England, which impaired their natural character, without ſubſtituting in its place what perhaps they meant to copy, has certainly rendered them worſe than formerly they were. Habitual diſſoluteneſs of manners continued beyond the pardonable period of life, was more common amongſt them than it is with us; and it reigned with the leſs hope of remedy, though poſſibly with ſomething of leſs miſchief, by being covered with more exterior decorum. They countenanced too much that licentious philoſophy which has helped to bring on their ruin. There was another error amongſt them more fatal. Thoſe of the commons, who approached to or exceeded many of the nobility in point of wealth, were not fully admitted to the rank and eſtimation which wealth, in reaſon and good policy, ought to beſtow in every country; though I think not equally with that of other nobility. The two kinds of ariſtocracy were too punctiliouſly kept aſunder; leſs ſo, however, than in Germany and ſome other nations.

This ſeparation, as I have already taken the liberty of ſuggeſting to you, I conceive to be one principal cauſe of the deſtruction of the old nobility. The military, particularly, was too excluſively reſerved for men of family. But, after all, this was an error of opinion, which a conflicting opinion would have rectified. A permanent aſſembly, in which the commons had their ſhare of power, would ſoon aboliſh whatever was too invidious and inſulting in theſe diſtinctions; and even the faults in the morals of the nobility would have

have been probably corrected by the greater varieties of occupation and purſuit to which a conſtitution by orders would have given riſe.

All this violent cry againſt the nobility I take to be a mere work of art. To be honoured and even privileged by the laws, opinions, and inveterate uſages of our country, growing out of the prejudice of ages, has nothing to provoke horror and indignation in any man. Even to be too tenacious of thoſe privileges, is not abſolutely a crime. The ſtrong ſtruggle in every individual to preſerve poſſeſſion of what he has found to belong to him and to diſtinguiſh him, is one of the ſecurities againſt injuſtice and deſpotiſm implanted in our nature. It operates as an inſtinct to ſecure property, and to preſerve communities in a ſettled ſtate. What is there to ſhock in this? Nobility is a graceful ornament to the civil order. It is the Corinthian capital of poliſhed ſociety. *Omnes boni nobilitati ſemper favemus*, was the ſaying of a wiſe and good man. It is indeed one ſign of a liberal and benevolent mind to incline to it with ſome ſort of partial propenſity. He feels no ennobling principle in his own heart who wiſhes to level all the artificial inſtitutions which have been adopted for giving a body to opinion, and permanence to fugitive eſteem. It is a ſour, malignant, envious diſpoſition, without taſte for the reality, or for any image or repreſentation of virtue, that ſees with joy the unmerited fall of what had long flouriſhed in ſplendour and in honour. I do not like to ſee any thing deſtroyed; any void produced in ſociety; any ruin on the face of the land. It was therefore with no diſappointment or diſſatisfaction that my enquiries and obſervation did not preſent to me any incorrigible vices in the nobleſſe of France, or any abuſe which could not be removed by a reform very ſhort of abolition. Your nobleſſe did not deſerve puniſhment; but to degrade is to puniſh.

It was with the ſame ſatisfaction I found that the reſult of my enquiry concerning your clergy was not diſſimilar. It is no ſoothing news to my ears, that great bodies of men are incurably corrupt. It is not with much credulity I liſten to any, when they ſpeak evil of thoſe whom they are going to plunder. I rather ſuſpect that vices are feigned or exaggerated, when profit is looked for in their puniſhment. An enemy is a bad witneſs: a robber is a worſe. Vices and abuſes there were undoubtedly in that order, and muſt be. It was an old eſtabliſhment, and not frequently reviſed. But I ſaw no crimes in the individuals that merited confiſcation of their ſubſtance, nor thoſe cruel inſults and degradations, and that unnatural perſecution which have been ſubſtituted in the place of meliorating regulation.

If there had been any juſt cauſe for this new religious perſecution, the atheiſtic libellers, who act as trumpeters to animate the populace to plunder, do not love any body ſo much as not to dwell with complacence on the vices of the exiſting clergy. This they have not done. They find themſelves obliged to rake into the hiſtories of former ages (which they have ranſacked with a malignant and profligate induſtry) for every inſtance of oppreſſion and perſecution which has been made by that body or in its favour, in order to juſtify, upon very iniquitous, becauſe very illogical principles of retaliation, their own perſecutions, and their own cruelties. After deſtroying all other genealogies and family diſtinctions, they invent a ſort of pedigree of crimes. It is not very juſt to chaſtiſe men for the offences of their natural anceſtors; but to take the fiction of anceſtry in a corporate ſucceſſion, as a ground for puniſhing men who have no relation to guilty acts, except in names and general deſcriptions, is a ſort of refinement in injuſtice belonging to the philoſophy of this enlightened age. The aſſembly puniſhes men, many,

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if not moſt, of whom abhor the violent conduct of eccleſiaſtics in former times as much as their preſent perſecutors can do, and who would be as loud and as ſtrong in the expreſſion of that ſenſe, if they were not well aware of the purpoſes for which all this declamation is employed.

Corporate bodies are immortal for the good of the members, but not for their puniſhment. Nations themſelves are ſuch corporations. As well might we in England think of waging inexpiable war upon all Frenchmen for the evils which they have brought upon us in the ſeveral periods of our mutual hoſtilities. You might, on your part, think yourſelves juſtified in falling upon all Engliſhmen on account of the unparalleled calamities brought upon the people of France by the unjuſt invaſions of our Henries and our Edwards. Indeed we ſhould be mutually juſtified in this exterminatory war upon each other, full as much as you are in the unprovoked perſecution of your preſent countrymen, on account of the conduct of men of the ſame name in other times.

We do not draw the moral leſſons we might from hiſtory. On the contrary, without care it may be uſed to vitiate our minds and to deſtroy our happineſs. In hiſtory a great volume is unrolled for our inſtruction, drawing the materials of future wiſdom from the paſt errors and infirmities of mankind. It may, in the perverſion, ſerve for a magazine, furniſhing offenſive and defenſive weapons for parties in church and ſtate, and ſupplying the means of keeping alive, or reviving diſſenſions and animoſities, and adding fuel to civil fury. Hiſtory conſiſts, for the greater part, of the miſeries brought upon the world by pride, ambition, avarice, revenge, luſt, ſedition, hypocriſy, ungoverned zeal, and all

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the train of diſorderly appetites, which ſhake the public with the ſame

—— " *troublous ſtorms that toſs*
" *The private ſtate, and render life unſweet.*"

Theſe vices are the *cauſes* of thoſe ſtorms. Religion, morals, laws, prerogatives, privileges, liberties, rights of men, are the *pretexts*. The pretexts are always found in ſome ſpecious appearance of a real good. You would not ſecure men from tyranny and ſedition, by rooting out of the mind the principles to which theſe fraudulent pretexts apply? If you did, you would root out every thing that is valuable in the human breaſt. As theſe are the pretexts, ſo the ordinary actors and inſtruments in great public evils are kings, prieſts, magiſtrates, ſenates, parliaments, national aſſemblies, judges, and captains. You would not cure the evil by reſolving, that there ſhould be no more monarchs, nor miniſters of ſtate, nor of the goſpel; no interpreters of law; no general officers; no public councils. You might change the names. The things in ſome ſhape muſt remain. A certain *quantum* of power muſt always exiſt in the community, in ſome hands, and under ſome appellation. Wiſe men will apply their remedies to vices, not to names; to the cauſes of evil which are permanent, not to the occaſional organs by which they act, and the tranſitory modes in which they appear. Otherwiſe you will be wiſe hiſtorically, a fool in practice. Seldom have two ages the ſame faſhion in their pretexts and the ſame modes of miſchief. Wickedneſs is a little more inventive. Whilſt you are diſcuſſing faſhion, the faſhion is gone by. The very ſame vice aſſumes a new body. The ſpirit tranſmigrates; and, far from loſing its principle of life by the change of its appearance, it is renovated in its new or-

gans with the freſh vigour of a juvenile activity. It walks abroad; it continues its ravages; whilſt you are gibbeting the carcaſs, or demoliſhing the tomb. You are terrifying yourſelf with ghoſts and apparitions, whilſt your houſe is the haunt of robbers. It is thus with all thoſe, who, attending only to the ſhell and huſk of hiſtory, think they are waging war with intolerance, pride, and cruelty, whilſt, under colour of abhorring the ill principles of antiquated parties, they are authorizing and feeding the ſame odious vices in different factions, and perhaps in worſe.

Your citizens of Paris formerly had lent themſelves as the ready inſtruments to ſlaughter the followers of Calvin, at the infamous maſſacre of St. Bartholomew. What ſhould we ſay to thoſe who could think of retaliating on the Pariſians of this day the abominations and horrors of that time? They are indeed brought to abhor *that* maſſacre. Ferocious as they are, it is not difficult to make them diſlike it; becauſe the politicians and faſhionable teachers have no intereſt in giving their paſſions exactly the ſame direction. Still however they find it their intereſt to keep the ſame ſavage diſpoſitions alive. It was but the other day that they cauſed this very maſſacre to be acted on the ſtage for the diverſion of the deſcendants of thoſe who committed it. In this tragic farce they produced the cardinal of Lorraine in his robes of function, ordering general ſlaughter. Was this ſpectacle intended to make the Pariſians abhor perſecution, and loath the effuſion of blood?—No, it was to teach them to perſecute their own paſtors; it was to excite them, by raiſing a diſguſt and horror of their clergy, to an alacrity in hunting down to deſtruction an order, which, if it ought to exiſt at all, ought to exiſt not only in ſafety, but in reverence. It was to ſtimulate their cannibal appetites (which one would think had been gorged ſufficiently) by variety and ſeaſoning; and to quicken

quicken them to an alertneſs in new murders and maſſacres, if it ſhould ſuit the purpoſe of the Guiſes of the day. An aſſembly, in which ſat a multitude of prieſts and prelates, was obliged to ſuffer this indignity at its door. The author was not ſent to the gallies, nor the players to the houſe of correction. Not long after this exhibition, thoſe players came forward to the aſſembly to claim the rites of that very religion which they had dared to expoſe, and to ſhew their proſtituted faces in the ſenate, whilſt the archbiſhop of Paris, whoſe function was known to his people only by his prayers and benedictions, and his wealth only by his alms, is forced to abandon his houſe, and to fly from his flock (as from ravenous wolves) becauſe, truly, in the ſixteenth century, the cardinal of Lorraine was a rebel and a murderer.

Such is the effect of the perverſion of hiſtory, by thoſe, who, for the ſame nefarious purpoſes, have perverted every other part of learning. But thoſe who will ſtand upon that elevation of reaſon, which places centuries under our eye, and brings things to the true point of compariſon, which obſcures little names, and effaces the colours of little parties, and to which nothing can aſcend but the ſpirit and moral quality of human actions, will ſay to the teachers of the Palais Royal,—the cardinal of Lorraine was the murderer of the ſixteenth century, you have the glory of being the murderers in the eighteenth; and this is the only difference between you. But hiſtory, in the nineteenth century, better underſtood, and better employed, will, I truſt, teach a civilized poſterity to abhor the miſdeeds of both theſe barbarous ages. It will teach future prieſts and magiſtrates not to retaliate upon the ſpeculative and inactive atheiſts of future times, the enormities committed by the preſent practical zealots and furious fanatics of that wretched error, which, in its quieſcent ſtate, is more than puniſhed, whenever it is embraced.

braced. It will teach poſterity not to make war upon either religion or philoſophy, for the abuſe which the hypocrites of both have made of the two moſt valuable bleſſings conferred upon us by the bounty of the univerſal Patron, who in all things eminently favours and protects the race of man.

If your clergy, or any clergy, ſhould ſhew themſelves vicious beyond the fair bounds allowed to human infirmity, and to thoſe profeſſional faults which can hardly be ſeparated from profeſſional virtues, though their vices never can countenance the exerciſe of oppreſſion, I do admit, that they would naturally have the effect of abating very much of our indignation againſt the tyrants who exceed meaſure and juſtice in their puniſhment. I can allow in clergymen, through all their diviſions, ſome tenaciouſneſs of their own opinion; ſome overflowings of zeal for its propagation; ſome predilection to their own ſtate and office; ſome attachment to the intereſt of their own corps; ſome preference to thoſe who liſten with docility to their doctrines, beyond thoſe who ſcorn and deride them. I allow all this, becauſe I am a man who have to deal with men, and who would not, through a violence of toleration, run into the greateſt of all intolerance. I muſt bear with infirmities until they feſter into crimes.

Undoubtedly, the natural progreſs of the paſſions, from frailty to vice, ought to be prevented by a watchful eye and a firm hand. But is it true that the body of your clergy had paſt thoſe limits of a juſt allowance? From the general ſtyle of your late publications of all ſorts, one would be led to believe that your clergy in France were a ſort of monſters; an horrible compoſition of ſuperſtition, ignorance, ſloth, fraud, avarice, and tyranny. But is this true? Is it true, that the lapſe of time, the ceſſation of conflicting intereſts,

the woful experience of the evils reſulting from party rage, have had no ſort of influence gradually to meliorate their minds? Is it true, that they were daily renewing invaſions on the civil power, troubling the domeſtic quiet of their country, and rendering the operations of its government feeble and precarious? Is it true, that the clergy of our times have preſſed down the laity with an iron hand, and were, in all places, lighting up the fires of a ſavage perſecution? Did they by every fraud endeavour to encreaſe their eſtates? Did they uſe to exceed the due demands on eſtates that were their own? Or, rigidly ſcrewing up right into wrong, did they convert a legal claim into a vexatious extortion? When not poſſeſſed of power, were they filled with the vices of thoſe who envy it? Were they enflamed with a violent litigious ſpirit of controverſy? Goaded on with the ambition of intellectual ſovereignty, were they ready to fly in the face of all magiſtracy, to fire churches, to maſſacre the prieſts of other deſcriptions, to pull down altars, and to make their way over the ruins of ſubverted governments to an empire of doctrine, ſometimes flattering, ſometimes forcing the conſciences of men from the juriſdiction of public inſtitutions into a ſubmiſſion to their perſonal authority, beginning with a claim of liberty and ending with an abuſe of power?

Theſe, or ſome of theſe, were the vices objected, and not wholly without foundation, to ſeveral of the churchmen of former times, who belonged to the two great parties which then divided and diſtracted Europe.

If there was in France, as in other countries there viſibly is, a great abatement, rather than any increaſe of theſe vices, inſtead of loading the preſent clergy with the crimes of other men, and the odious character of other times, in common equity they ought to be praiſed, encouraged, and ſupported,

ported, in their departure from a ſpirit which diſgraced their predeceſſors, and for having aſſumed a temper of mind and manners more ſuitable to their ſacred function.

When my occaſions took me into France, towards the cloſe of the late reign, the clergy, under all their forms, engaged a conſiderable part of my curioſity. So far from finding (except from one ſet of men, not then very numerous though very active) the complaints and diſcontents againſt that body, which ſome publications had given me reaſon to expect, I perceived little or no public or private uneaſineſs on their account. On further examination, I found the clergy in general, perſons of moderate minds and decorous manners; I include the ſeculars, and the regulars of both ſexes. I had not the good fortune to know a great many of the parochial clergy; but in general I received a perfectly good account of their morals, and of their attention to their duties. With ſome of the higher clergy I had a perſonal acquaintance; and of the reſt in that claſs, very good means of information. They were, almoſt all of them, perſons of noble birth. They reſembled others of their own rank; and where there was any difference, it was in their favour. They were more fully educated than the military nobleſſe; ſo as by no means to diſgrace their profeſſion by ignorance, or by want of fitneſs for the exerciſe of their authority. They ſeemed to me, beyond the clerical character, liberal and open; with the hearts of gentlemen, and men of honour; neither inſolent nor ſervile in their manners and conduct. They ſeemed to me rather a ſuperior claſs; a ſet of men, amongſt whom you would not be ſurpriſed to find a *Fenelon*. I ſaw among the clergy in Paris (many of the deſcription are not to be met with any where) men of great learning and candour; and I had reaſon to believe, that this deſcription was not confined to Paris. What I found in

other places, I know was accidental; and therefore to be preſumed a fair ſample. I ſpent a few days in a provincial town, where, in the abſence of the biſhop, I paſſed my evenings with three clergymen, his vicars general, perſons who would have done honour to any church. They were all well informed; two of them of deep, general, and extenſive erudition, antient and modern, oriental and weſtern; particularly in their own profeſſion. They had a more extenſive knowledge of our Engliſh divines than I expected; and they entered into the genius of thoſe writers with a critical accuracy. One of theſe gentlemen is ſince dead, the Abbé *Morangis*. I pay this tribute, without reluctance, to the memory of that noble, reverend, learned, and excellent perſon; and I ſhould do the ſame, with equal cheerfulneſs, to the merits of the others, who I believe are ſtill living, if I did not fear to hurt thoſe whom I am unable to ſerve.

Some of theſe eccleſiaſtics of rank, are, by all titles, perſons deſerving of general reſpect. They are deſerving of gratitude from me, and from many Engliſh. If this letter ſhould ever come into their hands, I hope they will believe there are thoſe of our nation who feel for their unmerited fall, and for the cruel confiſcation of their fortunes, with no common ſenſibility. What I ſay of them is a teſtimony, as far as one feeble voice can go, which I owe to truth. Whenever the queſtion of this unnatural perſecution is concerned, I will pay it. No one ſhall prevent me from being juſt and grateful. The time is fitted for the duty; and it is particularly becoming to ſhew our juſtice and gratitude, when thoſe who have deſerved well of us and of mankind are labouring under popular obloquy and the perſecutions of oppreſſive power.

You had before your revolution about an hundred and twenty biſhops. A few of them were men of eminent ſanc-

tity,

tity, and charity without limit. When we talk of the heroic, of courſe we talk of rare, virtue. I believe the inſtances of eminent depravity may be as rare amongſt them as thoſe of tranſcendent goodneſs. Examples of avarice and of licentiouſneſs may be picked out, I do not queſtion it, by thoſe who delight in the inveſtigation which leads to ſuch diſcoveries. A man, as old as I am, will not be aſtoniſhed that ſeveral, in every deſcription, do not lead that perfect life of ſelf-denial, with regard to wealth or to pleaſure, which is wiſhed for by all, by ſome expected, but by none exacted with more rigour, than by thoſe who are the moſt attentive to their own intereſts, or the moſt indulgent to their own paſſions. When I was in France, I am certain that the number of vicious prelates was not great. Certain individuals among them not diſtinguiſhable for the regularity of their lives, made ſome amends for their want of the ſevere virtues, in their poſſeſſion of the liberal; and were endowed with qualities which made them uſeful in the church and ſtate. I am told, that with few exceptions, Louis the Sixteenth had been more attentive to character, in his promotions to that rank, than his immediate predeceſſor; and I believe, (as ſome ſpirit of reform has prevailed through the whole reign) that it may be true. But the preſent ruling power has ſhewn a diſpoſition only to plunder the church. It has puniſhed *all* prelates; which is to favour the vicious, at leaſt in point of reputation. It has made a degrading penſionary eſtabliſhment, to which no man of liberal ideas or liberal condition will deſtine his children. It muſt ſettle into the loweſt claſſes of the people. As with you the inferior clergy are not numerous enough for their duties; as theſe duties are, beyond meaſure, minute and toilſome; as you have left no middle claſſes of clergy at their eaſe, in future nothing of ſcience or erudition can exiſt in the Gallican

lican church. To complete the project, without the leaſt attention to the rights of patrons, the aſſembly has provided in future an elective clergy; an arrangement which will drive out of the clerical profeſſion all men of ſobriety; all who can pretend to independence in their function or their conduct; and which will throw the whole direction of the public mind into the hands of a ſet of licentious, bold, crafty, factious, flattering wretches, of ſuch condition and ſuch habits of life as will make their contemptible penſions (in compariſon of which the ſtipend of an exciſeman is lucrative and honourable) an object of low and illiberal intrigue. Thoſe officers, whom they ſtill call biſhops, are to be elected to a proviſion comparatively mean, through the ſame arts, (that is, electioneering arts) by men of all religious tenets that are known or can be invented. The new lawgivers have not aſcertained any thing whatſoever concerning their qualifications, relative either to doctrine or to morals; no more than they have done with regard to the ſubordinate clergy; nor does it appear but that both the higher and the lower may, at their diſcretion, practiſe or preach any mode of religion or irreligion that they pleaſe. I do not yet ſee what the juriſdiction of biſhops over their ſubordinates is to be; or whether they are to have any juriſdiction at all.

In ſhort, Sir, it ſeems to me, that this new eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment is intended only to be temporary, and preparatory to the utter abolition, under any of its forms, of the Chriſtian religion, whenever the minds of men are prepared for this laſt ſtroke againſt it, by the accompliſhment of the plan for bringing its miniſters into univerſal contempt. They who will not believe, that the philoſophical fanatics who guide in theſe matters, have long entertained ſuch a deſign, are utterly ignorant of their character and proceedings. Theſe enthuſiaſts do not ſcruple to avow their opinion, that

a ſtate can ſubſiſt without any religion better than with one; and that they are able to ſupply the place of any good which may be in it, by a project of their own—namely, by a ſort of education they have imagined, founded in a knowledge of the phyſical wants of men; progreſſively carried to an enlightened ſelf-intereſt, which, when well underſtood, they tell us will identify with an intereſt more enlarged and public. The ſcheme of this education has been long known. Of late they diſtinguiſh it (as they have got an entire new nomenclature of technical terms) by the name of a *Civic Education*.

I hope their partizans in England, (to whom I rather attribute very inconſiderate conduct than the ultimate object in this deteſtable deſign) will ſucceed neither in the pillage of the eccleſiaſtics, nor in the introduction of a principle of popular election to our biſhoprics and parochial cures. This, in the preſent condition of the world, would be the laſt corruption of the church; the utter ruin of the clerical character; the moſt dangerous ſhock that the ſtate ever received through a miſunderſtood arrangement of religion. I know well enough that the biſhoprics and cures, under kingly and ſeignoral patronage, as now they are in England, and as they have been lately in France, are ſometimes acquired by unworthy methods; but the other mode of eccleſiaſtical canvas ſubjects them infinitely more ſurely and more generally to all the evil arts of low ambition, which, operating on and through greater numbers, will produce miſchief in proportion.

Thoſe of you who have robbed the clergy, think that they ſhall eaſily reconcile their conduct to all proteſtant nations; becauſe the clergy, whom they have thus plundered, degraded, and given over to mockery and ſcorn, are of the Roman Catholic, that is, of *their own* pretended perſuaſion.

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I have no doubt that ſome miſerable bigots will be found here as well as elſewhere, who hate ſects and parties different from their own, more than they love the ſubſtance of religion; and who are more angry with thoſe who differ from them in their particular plans and ſyſtems, than diſpleaſed with thoſe who attack the foundation of our common hope. Theſe men will write and ſpeak on the ſubject in the manner that is to be expected from their temper and character. Burnet ſays, that when he was in France, in the year 1683, "the "method which carried over the men of the fineſt parts to "popery was this——they brought themſelves to doubt of "the whole Chriſtian religion. When that was once done, "it ſeemed a more indifferent thing of what ſide or form "they continued outwardly." If this was then the eccleſiaſtic policy of France, it is what they have ſince but too much reaſon to repent of. They preferred atheiſm to a form of religion not agreeable to their ideas. They ſucceeded in deſtroying that form; and atheiſm has ſucceeded in deſtroying them. I can readly give credit to Burnet's ſtory; becauſe I have obſerved too much of a ſimilar ſpirit (for a little of it is "much too much") amongſt ourſelves. The humour, however, is not general.

The teachers who reformed our religion in England bore no ſort of reſemblance to your preſent reforming doctors in Paris. Perhaps they were (like thoſe whom they oppoſed) rather more than could be wiſhed under the influence of a party ſpirit; but they were moſt ſincere believers; men of the moſt fervent and exalted piety; ready to die (as ſome of them did die) like true heroes in defence of their particular ideas of Chriſtianity; as they would with equal fortitude, and more chearfully, for that ſtock of general truth, for the branches of which they contended with their blood. Theſe men would have diſavowed with horror thoſe wretches who

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claimed a fellowſhip with them upon no other titles than thoſe of their having pillaged the perſons with whom they maintained controverſies, and their having deſpiſed the common religion, for the purity of which they exerted themſelves with a zeal, which unequivocally beſpoke their higheſt reverence for the ſubſtance of that ſyſtem which they wiſhed to reform. Many of their deſcendants have retained the ſame zeal; but, (as leſs engaged in conflict) with more moderation. They do not forget that juſtice and mercy are ſubſtantial parts of religion. Impious men do not recommend themſelves to their communion by iniquity and cruelty towards any deſcription of their fellow-creatures.

We hear theſe new teachers continually boaſting of their ſpirit of toleration. That thoſe perſons ſhould tolerate all opinions, who think none to be of eſtimation, is a matter of ſmall merit. Equal neglect is not impartial kindneſs. The ſpecies of benevolence, which ariſes from contempt, is no true charity. There are in England abundance of men who tolerate in the true ſpirit of toleration. They think the dogmas of religion, though in different degrees, are all of moment; and that amongſt them there is, as amongſt all things of value, a juſt ground of preference. They favour, therefore, and they tolerate. They tolerate, not becauſe they deſpiſe opinions, but becauſe they reſpect juſtice. They would reverently and affectionately protect all religions, becauſe they love and venerate the great principle upon which they all agree, and the great object to which they are all directed. They begin more and more plainly to diſcern, that we have all a common cauſe, as againſt a common enemy. They will not be ſo miſled by the ſpirit of faction, as not to diſtinguiſh what is done in favour of their ſubdiviſion, from thoſe acts of hoſtility, which, through ſome particular de-

ſcription, are aimed at the whole corps, in which they themſelves, under another denomination, are included. It is impoſſible for me to ſay what may be the character of every deſcription of men amongſt us. But I ſpeak for the greater part; and for them, I muſt tell you, that ſacrilege is no part of their doctrine of good works; that, ſo far from calling you into their fellowſhip on ſuch title, if your profeſſors are admitted to their communion, they muſt carefully conceal their doctrine of the lawfulneſs of the proſcription of innocent men; and that they muſt make reſtitution of all ſtolen goods whatſoever. Till then they are none of ours.

You may ſuppoſe that we do not approve your confiſcation of the revenues of biſhops, and deans, and chapters, and parochial clergy poſſeſſing independent eſtates ariſing from land, becauſe we have the ſame ſort of eſtabliſhment in England. That objection, you will ſay, cannot hold as to the confiſcation of the goods of monks and nuns, and the abolition of their order. It is true, that this particular part of your general confiſcation does not affect England, as a precedent in point: but the reaſon applies; and it goes a great way. The long parliament confiſcated the lands of deans and chapters in England on the ſame ideas upon which your aſſembly ſet to ſale the lands of the monaſtic orders. But it is in the principle of injuſtice that the danger lies, and not in the deſcription of perſons on whom it is firſt exerciſed. I ſee, in a country very near us, a courſe of policy purſued, which ſets juſtice, the common concern of mankind, at defiance. With the national aſſembly of France, poſſeſſion is nothing, law and uſage are nothing. I ſee the national aſſembly openly reprobate the doctrine of preſcription, which * one of the greateſt of their own lawyers tells us, with great truth, is a part of the law of nature. He tells us, that the

* Domat.

poſitive

poſitive aſcertainment of its limits, and its ſecurity from invaſion, were among the cauſes for which civil ſociety itſelf has been inſtituted. If preſcription be once ſhaken, no ſpecies of property is ſecure, when it once becomes an object large enough to tempt the cupidity of indigent power. I ſee a practice perfectly correſpondent to their contempt of this great fundamental part of natural law. I ſee the confiſcators begin with biſhops, and chapters, and monaſteries; but I do not ſee them end there. I ſee the princes of the blood, who, by the oldeſt uſages of that kingdom, held large landed eſtates, (hardly with the compliment of a debate) deprived of their poſſeſſions, and in lieu of their ſtable independent property, reduced to the hope of ſome precarious, charitable penſion, at the pleaſure of an aſſembly, which of courſe will pay little regard to the rights of penſioners at pleaſure, when it deſpiſes thoſe of legal proprietors. Fluſhed with the inſolence of their firſt inglorious victories, and preſſed by the diſtreſſes cauſed by their luſt of unhallowed lucre, diſappointed but not diſcouraged, they have at length ventured completely to ſubvert all property of all deſcriptions throughout the extent of a great kingdom. They have compelled all men, in all tranſactions of commerce, in the diſpoſal of lands, in civil dealing, and through the whole communion of life, to accept as perfect payment and good and lawful tender, the ſymbols of their ſpeculations on a projected ſale of their plunder. What veſtiges of liberty or property have they left? The tenant-right of a cabbage-garden, a year's intereſt in a hovel, the good-will of an alehouſe, or a baker's ſhop, the very ſhadow of a conſtructive property, are more ceremoniouſly treated in our parliament than with you the oldeſt and moſt valuable landed poſſeſſions, in the hands of the moſt reſpectable perſonages, or than the whole body of the monied and commercial intereſt of your country. We

entertain an high opinion of the legiſlative authority; but we have never dreamt that parliaments had any right whatever to violate property, to overrule preſcription, or to force a currency of their own fiction in the place of that which is real, and recognized by the law of nations. But you, who began with refuſing to ſubmit to the moſt moderate reſtraints, have ended by eſtabliſhing an unheard of deſpotiſm. I find the ground upon which your confiſcators go is this; that indeed their proceedings could not be ſupported in a court of juſtice; but that the rules of preſcription cannot bind a legiſlative aſſembly *. So that this legiſlative aſſembly of a free nation ſits, not for the ſecurity, but for the deſtruction of property, and not of property only, but of every rule and maxim which can give it ſtability, and of thoſe inſtruments which can alone give it circulation.

When the Anabaptiſts of Munſter, in the ſixteenth century, had filled Germany with confuſion by their ſyſtem of levelling and their wild opinions concerning property, to what country in Europe did not the progreſs of their fury furniſh juſt cauſe of alarm? Of all things, wiſdom is the moſt terrified with epidemical fanaticiſm, becauſe of all enemies it is that againſt which ſhe is the leaſt able to furniſh any kind of reſource. We cannot be ignorant of the ſpirit of atheiſtical fanaticiſm, that is inſpired by a multitude of writings, diſperſed with incredible aſſiduity and expence, and by ſermons delivered in all the ſtreets and places of public reſort in Paris. Theſe writings and ſermons have filled the populace with a black and ſavage atrocity of mind, which ſuperſedes in them the common feelings of nature, as well as all ſentiments of morality and religion; inſomuch that theſe wretches are induced to bear with a ſullen patience the intolerable diſtreſſes brought upon them by the violent

* Speech of Mr. Camus, publiſhed by order of the national aſſembly.

convulſions

convulſions and permutations that have been made in property *? The ſpirit of proſelytiſm attends this ſpirit of fanaticiſm. They have ſocieties to cabal and correſpond at home and abroad for the propagation of their tenets. The republic of Berne, one of the happieſt, the moſt proſperous, and the beſt governed countries upon earth, is one of the great objects, at the deſtruction of which they aim. I am told they have in ſome meaſure ſucceeded in ſowing there the ſeeds of diſcontent. They are buſy throughout Germany. Spain and Italy have not been untried. England is not left out of the comprehenſive ſcheme of their malignant charity; and in England we find thoſe who ſtretch out their arms to them, who recommend their examples from more than one pulpit, and who chooſe, in more than one periodical meeting, publicly to correſpond with them, to applaud them, and to hold them up as objects for imitation; who receive from them tokens of confraternity, and ſtandards conſecrated amidſt their rites and myſteries †; who ſuggeſt to them

* Whether the following deſcription is ſtrictly true I know not; but it is what the publiſhers would have paſs for true, in order to animate others. In a letter from Toul, given in one of their papers, is the following paſſage concerning the people of that diſtrict: "Dans "la Révolution actuelle, ils ont réſiſté à toutes les *ſéductions du bigotiſme, aux perſécutions et aux* "*tracaſſeries* des Ennemis de la Révolution. *Oubliant leurs plus grands intérêts* pour rendre "hommage aux vues d'ordre général qui ont determiné l'Aſſemblée Nationale, ils voient, "*ſans ſe plaindre*, ſupprimer cette foule d'établiſſemens eccléſiaſtiques par leſquels *ils ſubſiſ-* "*toient*; et même, en perdant leur ſiège épiſcopal, la ſeule de toutes ces reſſources qui "pouvoit, ou plutôt *qui devoit, en toute équité*, leur être conſervée; condamnés *à la plus* "*effrayante misère*, ſans avoir *été ni pu être entendus, ils ne murmurent point*, ils reſtent fidèles "aux principes du plus pur patriotiſme; ils ſont encore prêts à *verſer leur ſang* pour le "maintien de la Conſtitution, qui va reduire leur Ville *à la plus déplorable nullité*." Theſe people are not ſuppoſed to have endured thoſe ſufferings and injuſtices in a ſtruggle for liberty, for the ſame account ſtates truly that they had been always free; their patience in beggary and ruin, and their ſuffering, without remonſtrance, the moſt flagrant and confeſſed injuſtice, if ſtrictly true, can be nothing but the effect of this dire fanaticiſm. A great multitude all over France is in the ſame condition and the ſame temper.

† See the proceedings of the confederation at *Nantz*.

leagues

leagues of perpetual amity, at the very time when the power, to which our conſtitution has excluſively delegated the federative capacity of this kingdom, may find it expedient to make war upon them.

It is not the confiſcation of our church property from this example in France that I dread, though I think this would be no trifling evil. The great ſource of my ſolicitude is, leſt it ſhould ever be conſidered in England as the policy of a ſtate, to ſeek a reſource in confiſcations of any kind; or that any one deſcription of citizens ſhould be brought to regard any of the others as their proper prey *. Nations are wading deeper and deeper into an ocean of boundleſs debt. Public debts, which at firſt were a ſecurity to governments, by intereſting many in the public tranquillity, are likely in their exceſs to become the means of their ſubverſion. If governments provide for theſe debts by heavy impoſitions, they periſh by becoming odious to the people: If they do not provide for them, they will be undone by the efforts of the moſt dangerous of all parties; I mean an extenſive diſcontented monied intereſt, injured and not deſtroyed. The men who compoſe this intereſt look for their ſecurity, in the firſt in-

* "Si plures ſunt ii quibus improbe datum eſt, quam illi quibus injuſte ademptum eſt, "idcirco plus etiam valent? Non enim numero hæc judicantur ſed pondere. Quam autem "habet æquitatem, ut agrum multis annis, aut etiam ſæculis ante poſſeſſum, qui nullum "habuit habeat; qui autem habuit amittat. Ac, propter hoc injuriæ genus, Lacedæmonii "Lyſandrum Ephorum expulerunt: Agin regem (quod nunquam antea apud eos accide-"rat) necaverunt: exque eo tempore tantæ diſcordiæ ſecutæ ſunt, ut et tyranni exſiſterint, "et optimates exterminarentur, et preclariſſime conſtituta reſpublica dilaberetur. Nec "vero ſolum ipſa cecidit, ſed etiam reliquam Græciam evertit contagionibus malorum, "quæ a Lacedæmoniis profectæ manarunt latius."—After ſpeaking of the conduct of the model of true patriots, Aratus of Sycion, which was in a very different ſpirit, he ſays, "Sic "par eſt agere cum civibus; non ut bis jam vidimus, haſtam in foro ponere et bona civium "voci ſubjicere præconis. At ille Græcus (id quod fuit ſapientis et præſtantis viri) omni-"bus conſulendum eſſe putavit: eaque eſt ſumma ratio et ſapientia boni civis, commoda "civium non divellere, ſed omnes eadem æquitate continere." Cic. Off. l. .

ſtance, to the fidelity of government; in the ſecond, to its power. If they find the old governments effete, worn out, and with their ſprings relaxed, ſo as not to be of ſufficient vigour for their purpoſes, they may ſeek new ones that ſhall be poſſeſſed of more energy; and this energy will be derived, not from an acquiſition of reſources, but from a contempt of juſtice. Revolutions are favourable to confiſcation; and it is impoſſible to know under what obnoxious names the next confiſcations will be authoriſed. I am ſure that the principles predominant in France extend to very many perſons and deſcriptions of perſons in all countries who think their innoxious indolence their ſecurity. This kind of innocence in proprietors may be argued into inutility; and inutility into an unfitneſs for their eſtates. Many parts of Europe are in open diſorder. In many others there is a hollow murmuring under ground; a confuſed movement is felt, that threatens a general earthquake in the political world. Already confederacies and correſpondencies of the moſt extraordinary nature are forming, in ſeveral countries *. In ſuch a ſtate of things we ought to hold ourſelves upon our guard. In all mutations (if mutations muſt be) the circumſtance which will ſerve moſt to blunt the edge of their miſchief, and to promote what good may be in them, is, that they ſhould find us with our minds tenacious of juſtice, and tender of property.

But it will be argued, that this confiſcation in France ought not to alarm other nations. They ſay it is not made from wanton rapacity; that it is a great meaſure of national policy, adopted to remove an extenſive, inveterate, ſuperſtitious miſchief. It is with the greateſt difficulty that I am able to ſeparate policy from juſtice. Juſtice is itſelf the great

* See two books intitled, Enige Originalſchriften des Illuminatenordens.—Syſtem und Folgen des Illuminatenordens. Munchen 1787.

ſtanding

ſtanding policy of civil ſociety; and any eminent departure from it, under any circumſtances, lies under the ſuſpicion of being no policy at all.

When men are encouraged to go into a certain mode of life by the exiſting laws, and protected in that mode as in a lawful occupation—when they have accommodated all their ideas, and all their habits to it—when the law had long made their adherence to its rules a ground of reputation, and their departure from them a ground of diſgrace and even of penalty—I am ſure it is unjuſt in legiſlature, by an arbitrary act, to offer a ſudden violence to their minds and their feelings; forcibly to degrade them from their ſtate and condition, and to ſtigmatize with ſhame and infamy that character and thoſe cuſtoms which before had been made the meaſure of their happineſs and honour. If to this be added an expulſion from their habitations, and a confiſcation of all their goods, I am not ſagacious enough to diſcover how this deſpotic ſport, made of the feelings, conſciences, prejudices, and properties of men, can be diſcriminated from the rankeſt tyranny.

If the injuſtice of the courſe purſued in France be clear, the policy of the meaſure, that is, the public benefit to be expected from it, ought to be at leaſt as evident, and at leaſt as important. To a man who acts under the influence of no paſſion, who has nothing in view in his projects but the public good, a great difference will immediately ſtrike him, between what policy would dictate on the original introduction of ſuch inſtitutions, and on a queſtion of their total abolition, where they have caſt their roots wide and deep, and where by long habit things more valuable than themſelves are ſo adapted to them, and in a manner interwoven with them, that the one cannot be deſtroyed without notably impairing the other. He might be embarraſſed, if the

caſe

caſe were really ſuch as ſophiſters repreſent it in their paltry ſtyle of debating. But in this, as in moſt queſtions of ſtate, there is a middle. There is ſomething elſe than the mere alternative of abſolute deſtruction, or unreformed exiſtence. *Spartam nactus es; hanc exorna.* This is, in my opinion, a rule of profound ſenſe, and ought never to depart from the mind of an honeſt reformer. I cannot conceive how any man can have brought himſelf to that pitch of preſumption, to conſider his country as nothing but *carte blanche*, upon which he may ſcribble whatever he pleaſes. A man full of warm ſpeculative benevolence may wiſh his ſociety otherwiſe conſtituted than he finds it; but a good patriot, and a true politician, always conſiders how he ſhall make the moſt of the exiſting materials of his country. A diſpoſition to preſerve, and an ability to improve, taken together, would be my ſtandard of a ſtateſman. Every thing elſe is vulgar in the conception, perilous in the execution.

There are moments in the fortune of ſtates when particular men are called to make improvements by great mental exertion. In thoſe moments, even when they ſeem to enjoy the confidence of their prince and country, and to be inveſted with full authority, they have not always apt inſtruments. A politician, to do great things, looks for a *power*, what our workmen call a *purchaſe*; and if he finds that power, in politics as in mechanics he cannot be at a loſs to apply it. In the monaſtic inſtitutions, in my opinion, was found a great *power* for the mechaniſm of politic benevolence. There were revenues with a public direction; there were men wholly ſet apart and dedicated to public purpoſes, without any other than public ties and public principles; men without the poſſibility of converting the eſtate of the community into a private fortune; men denied to ſelf-intereſts, whoſe avarice is for ſome community; men to whom perſonal po-

verty is honour, and implicit obedience ſtands in the place of freedom. In vain ſhall a man look to the poſſibility of making ſuch things when he wants them. The winds blow as they liſt. Theſe inſtitutions are the products of enthuſiaſm; they are the inſtruments of wiſdom. Wiſdom cannot create materials; they are the gifts of nature or of chance; her pride is in the uſe. The perennial exiſtence of bodies corporate and their fortunes, are things particularly ſuited to a man who has long views; who meditates deſigns that require time in faſhioning; and which propoſe duration when they are accompliſhed. He is not deſerving to rank high, or even to be mentioned in the order of great ſtateſmen, who, having obtained the command and direction of ſuch a power as exiſted in the wealth, the diſcipline, and the habits of ſuch corporations, as thoſe which you have raſhly deſtroyed, cannot find any way of converting it to the great and laſting benefit of his country. On the view of this ſubject a thouſand uſes ſuggeſt themſelves to a contriving mind. To deſtroy any power, growing wild from the rank productive force of the human mind, is almoſt tantamount, in the moral world, to the deſtruction of the apparently active properties of bodies in the material. It would be like the attempt to deſtroy (if it were in our competence to deſtroy) the expanſive force of fixed air in nitre, or the power of ſteam, or of electricity, or of magnetiſm. Theſe energies always exiſted in nature, and they were always diſcernible. They ſeemed, ſome of them unſerviceable, ſome noxious, ſome no better than a ſport to children; until contemplative ability, combining with practic ſkill, tamed their wild nature, ſubdued them to uſe, and rendered them at once the moſt powerful and the moſt tractable agents, in ſubſervience to the great views and deſigns of men. Did fifty thouſand perſons, whoſe mental and whoſe bodily labour you might direct,

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and ſo many hundred thouſand a year of a revenue, which was neither lazy nor ſuperſtitious, appear too big for your abilities to wield? Had you no way of uſing the men but by converting monks into penſioners? Had you no way of turning the revenue to account, but through the improvident reſource of a ſpendthrift ſale? If you were thus deſtitute of mental funds, the proceeding is in its natural courſe. Your politicians do not underſtand their trade; and therefore they ſell their tools.

But the inſtitutions favour of ſuperſtition in their very principle; and they nouriſh it by a permanent and ſtanding influence. This I do not mean to diſpute; but this ought not to hinder you from deriving from ſuperſtition itſelf any reſources which may thence be furniſhed for the public advantage. You derive benefits from many diſpoſitions and many paſſions of the human mind, which are of as doubtful a colour in the moral eye, as ſuperſtition itſelf. It was your buſineſs to correct and mitigate every thing which was noxious in this paſſion, as in all the paſſions. But is ſuperſtition the greateſt of all poſſible vices? In its poſſible exceſs I think it becomes a very great evil. It is, however, a moral ſubject; and of courſe admits of all degrees and all modifications. Superſtition is the religion of feeble minds; and they muſt be tolerated in an intermixture of it, in ſome trifling or ſome enthuſiaſtic ſhape or other, elſe you will deprive weak minds of a reſource found neceſſary to the ſtrongeſt. The body of all true religion conſiſts, to be ſure, in obedience to the will of the ſovereign of the world; in a confidence in his declarations; and an imitation of his perfections. The reſt is our own. It may be prejudicial to the great end; it may be auxiliary. Wiſe men, who as ſuch, are not *admirers* (not admirers at leaſt of the *Munera Terræ*) are not violently attached to theſe things, nor do they

violently hate them. Wiſdom is not the moſt ſevere corrector of folly. They are the rival follies, which mutually wage ſo unrelenting a war; and which make ſo cruel a uſe of their advantages, as they can happen to engage the immoderate vulgar on the one ſide or the other in their quarrels. Prudence would be neuter; but if, in the contention between fond attachment and fierce antipathy concerning things in their nature not made to produce ſuch heats, a prudent man were obliged to make a choice of what errors and exceſſes of enthuſiaſm he would condemn or bear, perhaps he would think the ſuperſtition which builds, to be more tolerable than that which demoliſhes—that which adorns a country, than that which deforms it—that which endows, than that which plunders—that which diſpoſes to miſtaken beneficence, than that which ſtimulates to real injuſtice—that which leads a man to refuſe to himſelf lawful pleaſures, than that which ſnatches from others the ſcanty ſubſiſtence of their ſelf-denial. Such, I think, is very nearly the ſtate of the queſtion between the antient founders of monkiſh ſuperſtition, and the ſuperſtition of the pretended philoſophers of the hour.

For the preſent I poſtpone all conſideration of the ſuppoſed public profit of the ſale, which however I conceive to be perfectly deluſive. I ſhall here only conſider it as a transfer of property. On the policy of that transfer I ſhall trouble you with a few thoughts.

In every proſperous community ſomething more is produced than goes to the immediate ſupport of the producer. This ſurplus forms the income of the landed capitaliſt. It will be ſpent by a proprietor who does not labour. But this idleneſs is itſelf the ſpring of labour; this repoſe the ſpur to induſtry. The only concern of the ſtate is, that the capital taken in rent from the land, ſhould be returned again to the induſtry

induſtry from whence it came; and that its expenditure ſhould be with the leaſt poſſible detriment to the morals of thoſe who expend it, and to thoſe of the people to whom it is returned.

In all the views of receipt, expenditure, and perſonal employment, a ſober legiſlator would carefully compare the poſſeſſor whom he was recommended to expel, with the ſtranger who was propoſed to fill his place. Before the inconveniences are incurred which *muſt* attend all violent revolutions in property through extenſive confiſcation, we ought to have ſome rational aſſurance that the purchaſers of the confiſcated property will be in a conſiderable degree more laborious, more virtuous, more ſober, leſs diſpoſed to extort an unreaſonable proportion of the gains of the labourer, or to conſume on themſelves a larger ſhare than is fit for the meaſure of an individual, or that they ſhould be qualified to diſpenſe the ſurplus in a more ſteady and equal mode, ſo as to anſwer the purpoſes of a politic expenditure, than the old poſſeſſors, call thoſe poſſeſſors, biſhops, or canons, or commendatory abbots, or monks, or what you pleaſe. The monks are lazy. Be it ſo. Suppoſe them no otherwiſe employed than by ſinging in the choir. They are as uſefully employed as thoſe who neither ſing nor ſay. As uſefully even as thoſe who ſing upon the ſtage. They are as uſefully employed as if they worked from dawn to dark in the innumerable ſervile, degrading, unſeemly, unmanly, and often moſt unwholeſome and peſtiferous occupations, to which by the ſocial œconomy ſo many wretches are inevitably doomed. If it were not generally pernicious to diſturb the natural courſe of things, and to impede, in any degree, the great wheel of circulation which is turned by the ſtrangely directed labour of theſe unhappy people, I ſhould be infinitely more inclined forcibly to reſcue them from

their

their miſerable induſtry, than violently to diſturb the tranquil repoſe of monaſtic quietude. Humanity, and perhaps policy, might better juſtify me in the one than in the other. It is a ſubject on which I have often reflected, and never reflected without feeling from it. I am ſure that no conſideration, except the neceſſity of ſubmitting to the yoke of luxury, and the deſpotiſm of fancy, who in their own imperious way will diſtribute the ſurplus product of the ſoil, can juſtify the toleration of ſuch trades and employments in a well-regulated ſtate. But, for this purpoſe of diſtribution, it ſeems to me, that the idle expences of monks are quite as well directed as the idle expences of us lay-loiterers.

When the advantages of the poſſeſſion, and of the project, are on a par, there is no motive for a change. But in the preſent caſe, perhaps they are not upon a par, and the difference is in favour of the poſſeſſion. It does not appear to me, that the expences of thoſe whom you are going to expel, do, in fact, take a courſe ſo directly and ſo generally leading to vitiate and degrade and render miſerable thoſe through whom they paſs, as the expences of thoſe favourites whom you are intruding into their houſes. Why ſhould the expenditure of a great landed property, which is a diſperſion of the ſurplus product of the ſoil, appear intolerable to you or to me, when it takes its courſe through the accumulation of vaſt libraries, which are the hiſtory of the force and weakneſs of the human mind; through great collections of antient records, medals, and coins, which atteſt and explain laws and cuſtoms; through paintings and ſtatues, that, by imitating nature, ſeem to extend the limits of creation; through grand monuments of the dead, which continue the regards and connexions of life beyond the grave; through collections of the ſpecimens of nature, which become a repreſentative aſſembly of all the claſſes and families of the

world, that by diſpoſition facilitate, and, by exciting curioſity, open the avenues to ſcience? If, by great permanent eſtabliſhments, all theſe objects of expence are better ſecured from the inconſtant ſport of perſonal caprice and perſonal extravagance, are they worſe than if the ſame taſtes prevailed in ſcattered individuals? Does not the ſweat of the maſon and carpenter, who toil in order to partake the ſweat of the peaſant, flow as pleaſantly and as ſalubriouſly, in the conſtruction and repair of the majeſtic edifices of religion, as in the painted booths and ſordid ſties of vice and luxury; as honourably and as profitably in repairing thoſe ſacred works, which grow hoary with innumerable years, as on the momentary receptacles of tranſient voluptuouſneſs; in opera-houſes, and brothels, and gaming-houſes, and club-houſes, and obeliſks in the Champ de Mars? Is the ſurplus product of the olive and the vine worſe employed in the frugal ſuſtenance of perſons, whom the fictions of a pious imagination raiſe to dignity by conſtruing in the ſervice of God, than in pampering the innumerable multitude of thoſe who are degraded by being made uſeleſs domeſtics ſubſervient to the pride of man? Are the decorations of temples an expenditure leſs worthy a wiſe man than ribbons, and laces, and national cockades, and petits maiſons, and petit foupers, and all the innumerable fopperies and follies in which opulence ſports away the burthen of its ſuperfluity?

We tolerate even theſe; not from love of them, but for fear of worſe. We tolerate them, becauſe property and liberty, to a degree, require that toleration. But why proſcribe the other, and ſurely, in every point of view, the more laudable uſe of eſtates? Why, through the violation of all property, through an outrage upon every principle of liberty, forcibly carry them from the better to the worſe?

This

This compariſon between the new individuals and the old corps is made upon a ſuppoſition that no reform could be made in the latter. But in a queſtion of reformation, I always conſider corporate bodies, whether ſole or conſiſting of many, to be much more ſuſceptible of a public direction by the power of the ſtate, in the uſe of their property, and in the regulation of modes and habits of life in their members, than private citizens ever can be, or perhaps ought to be; and this ſeems to me a very material conſideration for thoſe who undertake any thing which merits the name of a politic enterprize.—So far as to the eſtates of monaſteries.

With regard to the eſtates poſſeſſed by biſhops and canons, and commendatory abbots, I cannot find out for what reaſon ſome landed eſtates may not be held otherwiſe than by inheritance. Can any philoſophic ſpoiler undertake to demonſtrate the poſitive or the comparative evil, of having a certain, and that too a large portion of landed property, paſſing in ſucceſſion through perſons whoſe title to it is, always in theory, and often in fact, an eminent degree of piety, morals, and learning; a property which, by its deſtination, in their turn, and on the ſcore of merit, gives to the nobleſt families renovation and ſupport, to the loweſt the means of dignity and elevation; a property, the tenure of which is the performance of ſome duty, (whatever value you may chooſe to ſet upon that duty) and the character of whoſe proprietors demands at leaſt an exterior decorum and gravity of manners; who are to exerciſe a generous but temperate hoſpitality; part of whoſe income they are to conſider as a truſt for charity; and who, even when they fail in their truſt, when they ſlide from their character, and degenerate into a mere common ſecular nobleman or gentleman, are in no reſpect worſe than thoſe who may ſucceed them

them in their forfeited poſſeſſions? Is it better that eſtates ſhould be held by thoſe who have no duty than by thoſe who have one?—by thoſe whoſe character and deſtination point to virtues, than by thoſe who have no rule and direction in the expenditure of their eſtates but their own will and appetite? Nor are theſe eſtates held altogether in the character or with the evils ſuppoſed inherent in mortmain. They paſs from hand to hand with a more rapid circulation than any other. No exceſs is good; and therefore too great a proportion of landed property may be held officially for life; but it does not ſeem to me of material injury to any commonwealth, that there ſhould exiſt ſome eſtates that have a chance of being acquired by other means than the previous acquiſition of money.

This letter is grown to a great length, though it is indeed ſhort with regard to the infinite extent of the ſubject. Various avocations have from time to time called my mind from the ſubject. I was not ſorry to give myſelf leiſure to obſerve whether, in the proceedings of the national aſſembly, I might not find reaſons to change or to qualify ſome of my firſt ſentiments. Every thing has confirmed me more ſtrongly in my firſt opinions. It was my original purpoſe to take a view of the principles of the national aſſembly with regard to the great and fundamental eſtabliſhments; and to compare the whole of what you have ſubſtituted in the place of what you have deſtroyed, with the ſeveral members of our Britiſh conſtitution. But this plan is of greater extent than at firſt I computed, and I find that you have little deſire to take the advantage of any examples. At preſent I muſt content myſelf with ſome remarks upon your eſtabliſhments; reſerving for another time what I propoſed to ſay concerning the ſpirit of our Britiſh monarchy, ariſtocracy, and democracy, as practically they exiſt.

I have taken a review of what has been done by the governing power in France. I have certainly ſpoke of it with freedom. Thoſe whoſe principle it is to deſpiſe the antient permanent ſenſe of mankind, and to ſet up a ſcheme of ſociety on new principles, muſt naturally expect that ſuch of us who think better of the judgment of the human race than of theirs, ſhould conſider both them and their devices, as men and ſchemes upon their trial. They muſt take it for granted that we attend much to their reaſon, but not at all to their authority. They have not one of the great influencing prejudices of mankind in their favour. They avow their hoſtility to opinion. Of courſe they muſt expect no ſupport from that influence, which, with every other authority, they have depoſed from the ſeat of its juriſdiction.

I can never conſider this aſſembly as any thing elſe than a voluntary aſſociation of men, who have availed themſelves of circumſtances, to ſeize upon the power of the ſtate. They have not the ſanction and authority of the character under which they firſt met. They have aſſumed another of a very different nature; and have completely altered and inverted all the relations in which they originally ſtood. They do not hold the authority they exerciſe under any conſtitutional law of the ſtate. They have departed from the inſtructions of the people by whom they were ſent; which inſtructions, as the aſſembly did not act in virtue of any antient uſage or ſettled law, were the ſole ſource of their authority. The moſt conſiderable of their acts have not been done by great majorities; and in this ſort of near diviſions, which carry only the conſtructive authority of the whole, ſtrangers will conſider reaſons as well as reſolutions.

If they had ſet up this new experimental government as a neceſſary ſubſtitute for an expelled tyranny, mankind would

anticipate the time of preſcription, which, through long uſage, mellows into legality governments that were violent in their commencement. All thoſe who have affections which lead them to the conſervation of civil order would recognize, even in its cradle, the child as legitimate, which has been produced from thoſe principles of cogent expediency to which all juſt governments owe their birth, and on which they juſtify their continuance. But they will be late and reluctant in giving any ſort of countenance to the operations of a power, which has derived its birth from no law and no neceſſity; but which on the contrary has had its origin in thoſe vices and ſiniſter practices by which the ſocial union is often diſturbed and ſometimes deſtroyed. This aſſembly has hardly a year's preſcription. We have their own word for it that they have made a revolution. To make a revolution is a meaſure which, *prima fronte*, requires an apology. To make a revolution is to ſubvert the antient ſtate of our country; and no common reaſons are called for to juſtify ſo violent a proceeding. The ſenſe of mankind authorizes us to examine into the mode of acquiring new power, and to criticiſe on the uſe that is made of it with leſs awe and reverence than that which is uſually conceded to a ſettled and recognized authority.

In obtaining and ſecuring their power, the aſſembly proceeds upon principles the moſt oppoſite from thoſe which appear to direct them in the uſe of it. An obſervation on this difference will let us into the true ſpirit of their conduct. Every thing which they have done, or continue to do, in order to obtain and keep their power, is by the moſt common arts. They proceed exactly as their anceſtors of ambition have done before them. Trace them through all their artifices, frauds, and violences, you can find nothing at all that is new. They follow precedents and examples with

the punctilious exactneſs of a pleader. They never depart an iota from the authentic formulas of tyranny and uſurpation. But in all the regulations relative to the public good, the ſpirit has been the very reverſe of this. There they commit the whole to the mercy of untried ſpeculations; they abandon the deareſt intereſts of the public to thoſe looſe theories, to which none of them would chuſe to truſt the ſlighteſt of his private concerns. They make this difference, becauſe in their deſire of obtaining and ſecuring power they are thoroughly in earneſt; there they travel in the beaten road. The public intereſts, becauſe about them they have no real ſolicitude, they abandon wholly to chance; I ſay to chance, becauſe their ſchemes have nothing in experience to prove their tendency beneficial.

We muſt always ſee with a pity not unmixed with reſpect, the errors of thoſe who are timid and doubtful of themſelves with regard to points wherein the happineſs of mankind is concerned. But in theſe gentlemen there is nothing of the tender parental ſolicitude which fears to cut up the infant for the ſake of an experiment. In the vaſtneſs of their promiſes, and the confidence of their predictions, they far outdo all the boaſting of empirics. The arrogance of their pretenſions, in a manner provokes, and challenges us to an enquiry into their foundation.

I am convinced that there are men of conſiderable parts among the popular leaders in the national aſſembly. Some of them diſplay eloquence in their ſpeeches and their writings. This cannot be without powerful and cultivated talents. But eloquence may exiſt without a proportionable degree of wiſdom. When I ſpeak of ability, I am obliged to diſtinguiſh. What they have done towards the ſupport of their ſyſtem beſpeaks no ordinary men. In the ſyſtem itſelf,

ſelf, taken as the ſcheme of a republic conſtructed for procuring the proſperity and ſecurity of the citizen, and for promoting the ſtrength and grandeur of the ſtate, I confeſs myſelf unable to find out any thing which diſplays, in a ſingle inſtance, the work of a comprehenſive and diſpoſing mind, or even the proviſions of a vulgar prudence. Their purpoſe every where ſeems to have been to evade and ſlip aſide from *difficulty*. This it has been the glory of the great maſters in all the arts to confront, and to overcome; and when they had overcome the firſt difficulty, to turn it into an inſtrument for new conqueſts over new difficulties; thus to enable them to extend the empire of their ſcience; and even to puſh forward beyond the reach of their original thoughts, the land-marks of the human underſtanding itſelf. Difficulty is a ſevere inſtructor, ſet over us by the ſupreme ordinance of a parental guardian and legiſlator, who knows us better than we know ourſelves, as he loves us better too. *Pater ipſe colendi haud facilem eſſe viam voluit.* He that wreſtles with us ſtrengthens our nerves, and ſharpens our ſkill. Our antagoniſt is our helper. This amicable conflict with difficulty obliges us to an intimate acquaintance with our object, and compels us to conſider it in all its relations. It will not ſuffer us to be ſuperficial. It is the want of nerves of underſtanding for ſuch a taſk; it is the degenerate fondneſs for tricking ſhort-cuts, and little fallacious facilities, that has in ſo many parts of the world created governments with arbitrary powers. They have created the late arbitrary monarchy of France. They have created the arbitrary republic of Paris. With them defects in wiſdom are to be ſupplied by the plenitude of force. They get nothing by it. Commencing their labours on a principle of ſloth, they have the common fortune of ſlothful men. The difficulties which they rather had eluded than eſcaped, meet them.

them again in their courſe; they multiply and thicken on them; they are involved, through a labyrinth of confuſed detail, in an induſtry without limit, and without direction; and, in concluſion, the whole of their work becomes feeble, vitious, and inſecure.

It is this inability to wreſtle with difficulty which has obliged the arbitrary aſſembly of France to commence their ſchemes of reform with abolition and total deſtruction *. But is it in deſtroying and pulling down that ſkill is diſplayed? Your mob can do this as well at leaſt as your aſſemblies. The ſhalloweſt underſtanding, the rudeſt hand, is more than equal to that taſk. Rage and phrenzy will pull down more in half an hour, than prudence, deliberation, and foreſight can build up in an hundred years. The errors and defects of old eſtabliſhments are viſible and palpable. It calls for little ability to point them out; and where abſolute power is given, it requires but a word wholly to aboliſh the vice and the eſtabliſhment together. The ſame lazy but reſtleſs diſpoſition, which loves ſloth and hates quiet, directs theſe politicians, when they come to work, for ſupplying the place of what they have deſtroyed. To make every thing the reverſe of what they have ſeen is quite as eaſy as to deſtroy. No difficulties occur in what has never been tried. Criticiſm is almoſt baffled in diſcovering the defects

* A leading member of the aſſembly, M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, has expreſſed the principle of all their proceedings as clearly as poſſible. Nothing can be more ſimple:— "*Tous les établiſſemens en France couronnent le malheur du peuple: pour le rendre heureux il faut le renouveler; changer ſes idées; changer ſes loix; changer ſes mœurs; . . . . . changer les hommes; changer les choſes; changer les mots . . . . . tout détruire; oui, tout détruire; puiſque tout eſt à recréer.*" This gentleman was choſen preſident in an aſſembly not ſitting at the *Quinze vingt*, or the *Petites Maiſons*; and compoſed of perſons giving themſelves out to be rational beings; but neither his ideas, language, or conduct, differ in the ſmalleſt degree from the diſcourſes, opinions, and actions of thoſe within and without the aſſembly, who direct the operations of the machine now at work in France.

of

of what has not exiſted; and eager enthuſiaſm, and cheating hope, have all the wide field of imagination in which they may expatiate with little or no oppoſition.

At once to preſerve and to reform is quite another thing. When the uſeful parts of an old eſtabliſhment are kept, and what is ſuperadded is to be fitted to what is retained, a vigorous mind, ſteady perſevering attention, various powers of compariſon and combination, and the reſources of an underſtanding fruitful in expedients are to be exerciſed; they are to be exerciſed in a continued conflict with the combined force of oppoſite vices; with the obſtinacy that rejects all improvement, and the levity that is fatigued and diſguſted with every thing of which it is in poſſeſſion. But you may object—"A proceſs of this kind is ſlow. It is not fit for an "aſſembly, which glories in performing in a few months "the work of ages. Such a mode of reforming, poſſibly "might take up many years." Without queſtion it might; and it ought. It is one of the excellencies of a method in which time is amongſt the aſſiſtants, that its operation is ſlow, and in ſome caſes almoſt imperceptible. If circumſpection and caution are a part of wiſdom, when we work only upon inanimate matter, ſurely they become a part of duty too, when the ſubject of our demolition and conſtruction is not brick and timber, but ſentient beings, by the ſudden alteration of whoſe ſtate, condition, and habits, multitudes may be rendered miſerable. But it ſeems as if it were the prevalent opinion in Paris, that an unfeeling heart, and an undoubting confidence, are the ſole qualifications for a perfect legiſlator. Far different are my ideas of that high office. The true lawgiver ought to have an heart full of ſenſibility. He ought to love and reſpect his kind, and to fear himſelf. It may be allowed to his temperament to catch his ultimate object with an intuitive glance; but his

movements

movements towards it ought to be deliberate. Political arrangement, as it is a work for ſocial ends, is to be only wrought by ſocial means. There mind muſt conſpire with mind. Time is required to produce that union of minds which alone can produce all the good we aim at. Our patience will atchieve more than our force. If I might venture to appeal to what is ſo much out of faſhion in Paris, I mean to experience, I ſhould tell you, that in my courſe I have known, and, according to my meaſure, have co-operated with great men; and I have never yet ſeen any plan which has not been mended by the obſervations of thoſe who were much inferior in underſtanding to the perſon who took the lead in the buſineſs. By a ſlow but well-ſuſtained progreſs, the effect of each ſtep is watched; the good or ill ſucceſs of the firſt, gives light to us in the ſecond; and ſo, from light to light, we are conducted with ſafety through the whole ſeries. We ſee, that the parts of the ſyſtem do not claſh. The evils latent in the moſt promiſing contrivances are provided for as they ariſe. One advantage is as little as poſſible ſacrificed to another. We compenſate, we reconcile, we balance. We are enabled to unite into a conſiſtent whole the various anomalies and contending principles that are found in the minds and affairs of men. From hence ariſes, not an excellence in ſimplicity, but one far ſuperior, an excellence in compoſition. Where the great intereſts of mankind are concerned through a long ſucceſſion of generations, that ſucceſſion ought to be admitted into ſome ſhare in the councils which are ſo deeply to affect them. If juſtice requires this, the work itſelf requires the aid of more minds than one age can furniſh. It is from this view of things that the beſt legiſlators have been often ſatisfied with the eſtabliſhment of ſome ſure, ſolid, and ruling principle in government; a power like that which ſome of the philoſophers

phers have called a plaſtic nature; and having fixed the principle, they have left it afterwards to its own operation.

To proceed in this manner, that is, to proceed with a preſiding principle, and a prolific energy, is with me the criterion of profound wiſdom. What your politicians think the marks of a bold, hardy genius, are only proofs of a deplorable want of ability. By their violent haſte, and their defiance of the proceſs of nature, they are delivered over blindly to every projector and adventurer, to every alchymiſt and empiric. They deſpair of turning to account any thing that is common. Diet is nothing in their ſyſtem of remedy. The worſt of it is, that this their deſpair of curing common diſtempers by regular methods, ariſes not only from defect of comprehenſion, but, I fear, from ſome malignity of diſpoſition. Your legiſlators ſeem to have taken their opinions of all profeſſions, ranks, and offices, from the declamations and buffooneries of ſatiriſts; who would themſelves be aſtoniſhed if they were held to the letter of their own deſcriptions. By liſtening only to theſe, your leaders regard all things only on the ſide of their vices and faults, and view thoſe vices and faults under every colour of exaggeration. It is undoubtedly true, though it may ſeem paradoxical; but in general, thoſe who are habitually employed in finding and diſplaying faults, are unqualified for the work of reformation: becauſe their minds are not only unfurniſhed with patterns of the fair and good, but by habit they come to take no delight in the contemplation of thoſe things. By hating vices too much, they come to love men too little. It is therefore not wonderful, that they ſhould be indiſpoſed and unable to ſerve them. From hence ariſes the complexional diſpoſition of ſome of your guides to pull every thing in pieces. At

this malicious game they diſplay the whole of their *quadrimanous* activity. As to the reſt, the paradoxes of eloquent writers, brought forth purely as a ſport of fancy, to try their talents, to rouze attention, and excite ſurprize, are taken up by theſe gentlemen, not in the ſpirit of the original authors, as means of cultivating their taſte and improving their ſtyle. Theſe paradoxes become with them ſerious grounds of action, upon which they proceed in regulating the moſt important concerns of the ſtate. Cicero ludicrouſly deſcribes Cato as endeavouring to act in the commonwealth upon the ſchool paradoxes which exerciſed the wits of the junior ſtudents in the ſtoic philoſophy. If this was true of Cato, theſe gentlemen copy after him in the manner of ſome perſons who lived about his time—*pede nudo Catonem.* Mr. Hume told me, that he had from Rouſſeau himſelf the ſecret of his principles of compoſition. That acute, though eccentric, obſerver had perceived, that to ſtrike and intereſt the public, the marvellous muſt be produced; that the marvellous of the heathen mythology had long ſince loſt its effect; that giants, magicians, fairies, and heroes of romance which ſucceeded, had exhauſted the portion of credulity which belonged to their age; that now nothing was left to a writer but that ſpecies of the marvellous, which might ſtill be produced, and with as great an effect as ever, though in another way; that is, the marvellous in life, in manners, in characters, and in extraordinary ſituations, giving riſe to new and unlooked-for ſtrokes in politics and morals. I believe, that were Rouſſeau alive, and in one of his lucid intervals, he would be ſhocked at the practical phrenzy of his ſcholars, who in their paradoxes are ſervile imitators; and even in their incredulity diſcover an implicit faith.

Men

Men who undertake conſiderable things, even in a regular way, ought to give us ground to preſume ability. But the phyſician of the ſtate, who, not ſatisfied with the cure of diſtempers, undertakes to regenerate conſtitutions, ought to ſhew uncommon powers. Some very unuſual appearances of wiſdom ought to diſplay themſelves on the face of the deſigns of thoſe who appeal to no practice, and who copy after no model. Has any ſuch been manifeſted? I ſhall take a view (it ſhall for the ſubject be a very ſhort one) of what the aſſembly has done, with regard, firſt, to the conſtitution of the legiſlature; in the next place, to that of the executive power; then to that of the judicature; afterwards to the model of the army; and conclude with the ſyſtem of finance, to ſee whether we can diſcover in any part of their ſchemes the portentous ability, which may juſtify theſe bold undertakers in the ſuperiority which they aſſume over mankind.

It is in the model of the ſovereign and preſiding part of this new republic, that we ſhould expect their grand diſplay. Here they were to prove their title to their proud demands. For the plan itſelf at large, and for the reaſons on which it is grounded, I refer to the journals of the aſſembly of the 29th of September 1789, and to the ſubſequent proceedings which have made any alterations in the plan. So far as in a matter ſomewhat confuſed I can ſee light, the ſyſtem remains ſubſtantially as it has been originally framed. My few remarks will be ſuch as regard its ſpirit, its tendency, and its fitneſs for framing a popular commonwealth, which they profeſs theirs to be, ſuited to the ends for which any commonwealth, and particularly ſuch a commonwealth, is made. At the ſame time, I mean to conſider its conſiſtency with itſelf and its own principles.

Old eſtabliſhments are tried by their effects. If the people

are happy, united, wealthy, and powerful, we preſume the reſt. We conclude that to be good from whence good is derived. In old eſtabliſhments various correctives have been found for their aberrations from theory. Indeed they are the reſults of various neceſſities and expediences. They are not often conſtructed after any theory; theories are rather drawn from them. In them we often ſee the end beſt obtained, where the means ſeem not perfectly reconcileable to what we may fancy was the original ſcheme. The means taught by experience may be better ſuited to political ends than thoſe contrived in the original project. They again react upon the primitive conſtitution, and ſometimes improve the deſign itſelf from which they ſeem to have departed. I think all this might be curiouſly exemplified in the Britiſh conſtitution. At worſt, the errors and deviations of every kind in reckoning are found and computed, and the ſhip proceeds in her courſe. This is the caſe of old eſtabliſhments; but in a new and merely theoretic ſyſtem, it is expected that every contrivance ſhall appear, on the face of it, to anſwer its end; eſpecially where the projectors are no way embarraſſed with an endeavour to accommodate the new building to an old one, either in the walls or on the foundations.

The French builders, clearing away as mere rubbiſh whatever they found, and, like their ornamental gardeners, forming every thing into an exact level, propoſe to reſt the whole local and general legiſlature on three baſes of three different kinds; one geometrical, one arithmetical, and the third financial; the firſt of which they call the *baſis of territory*; the ſecond, the *baſis of population*; and the third, the *baſis of contribution*. For the accompliſhment of the firſt of theſe purpoſes they divide the area of their country into eighty-three pieces, regularly ſquare, of eighteen leagues by eighteen.

eighteen. Theſe large diviſions are called *Departments*. Theſe they portion, proceeding by ſquare meaſurement, into ſeventeen hundred and twenty diſtricts called *Communes*. Theſe again they ſubdivide, ſtill proceeding by ſquare meaſurement, into ſmaller diſtricts called *Cantons*, making in all 6,400.

At firſt view this geometrical baſis of theirs preſents not much to admire or to blame. It calls for no great legiſlative talents. Nothing more than an accurate land ſurveyor, with his chain, ſight, and theodolite, is requiſite for ſuch a plan as this. In the old diviſions of the country various accidents at various times, and the ebb and flow of various properties and juriſdictions, ſettled their bounds. Theſe bounds were not made upon any fixed ſyſtem undoubtedly. They were ſubject to ſome inconveniencies; but they were inconveniencies for which uſe had found remedies, and habit had ſupplied accommodation and patience. In this new pavement of ſquare within ſquare, and this organiſation and ſemiorganiſation made on the ſyſtem of Empedocles and Buffon, and not upon any politic principle, it is impoſſible that innumerable local inconveniencies, to which men are not habituated, muſt not ariſe. But theſe I paſs over, becauſe it requires an accurate knowledge of the country, which I do not poſſeſs, to ſpecify them.

When theſe ſtate ſurveyors came to take a view of their work of meaſurement, they ſoon found, that in politics, the moſt fallacious of all things was geometrical demonſtration. They had then recourſe to another baſis (or rather buttreſs) to ſupport the building which tottered on that falſe foundation. It was evident, that the goodneſs of the ſoil, the number of the people, their wealth, and the largeneſs of their contribution, made ſuch infinite variations between ſquare and ſquare as to render menſuration a ridiculous

ſtandard

ſtandard of power in the commonwealth, and equality in geometry the moſt unequal of all meaſures in the diſtribution of men. However, they could not give it up. But dividing their political and civil repreſentation into three parts, they allotted one of thoſe parts to the ſquare meaſurement, without a ſingle fact or calculation to aſcertain whether this territorial proportion of repreſentation was fairly aſſigned, and ought upon any principle really to be a third. Having however given to geometry this portion (of a third for her dower) out of compliment I ſuppoſe to that ſublime ſcience, they left the other two to be ſcuffled for between the other parts, population and contribution.

When they came to provide for population, they were not able to proceed quite ſo ſmoothly as they had done in the field of their geometry. Here their arithmetic came to bear upon their juridical metaphyſics. Had they ſtuck to their metaphyſic principles, the arithmetical proceſs would be ſimple indeed. Men, with them, are ſtrictly equal, and are entitled to equal rights in their own government. Each head, on this ſyſtem, would have its vote, and every man would vote directly for the perſon who was to repreſent him in the legiſlature. "But ſoft—by regular degrees, not yet." This metaphyſic principle, to which law, cuſtom, uſage, policy, reaſon, were to yield, is to yield itſelf to their pleaſure. There muſt be many degrees, and ſome ſtages, before the repreſentative can come in contact with his conſtituent. Indeed, as we ſhall ſoon ſee, theſe two perſons are to have no ſort of communion with each other. Firſt, the voters in the *Canton*, who compoſe what they call *primary aſſemblies*, are to have a *qualification*. What! a qualification on the indefeaſible rights of men? Yes; but it ſhall be a very ſmall qualification. Our injuſtice ſhall be very little oppreſſive; only the local valuation of three days labour paid to the pub-

lic.

lic. Why, this is not much, I readily admit, for any thing but the utter ſubverſion of your equaliſing principle. As a qualification it might as well be let alone; for it anſwers no one purpoſe for which qualifications are eſtabliſhed: and, on your ideas, it excludes from a vote, the man of all others whoſe natural equality ſtands the moſt in need of protection and defence; I mean the man who has nothing elſe but his natural equality to guard him. You order him to buy the right, which you before told him nature had given to him gratuitouſly at his birth, and of which no authority on earth could lawfully deprive him. With regard to the perſon who cannot come up to your market, a tyrannous ariſtocracy, as againſt him, is eſtabliſhed at the very outſet, by you who pretend to be its ſworn foe.

The gradation proceeds. Theſe primary aſſemblies of the *Canton* elect deputies to the *Commune*; one for every two hundred qualified inhabitants. Here is the firſt medium put between the primary elector and the repreſentative legiſlator; and here a new turnpike is fixed for taxing the rights of men with a ſecond qualification: for none can be elected into the *Commune* who does not pay the amount of ten days labour. Nor have we yet done. There is ſtill to be another gradation*. Theſe *Communes*, choſen by the *Canton*, chooſe to the *Department*; and the deputies of the *Department* chooſe their deputies to the *National Aſſembly*. Here is a third barrier of a ſenſeleſs qualification. Every deputy to the national aſſembly muſt pay, in direct contribution, to the

* The aſſembly, in executing the plan of their committee, made ſome alterations. They have ſtruck out one ſtage in theſe gradations; this removes a part of the objection: but the main objection, namely, that in their ſcheme the firſt conſtituent voter has no connexion with the repreſentative legiſlator, remains in all its force. There are other alterations, ſome poſſibly for the better, ſome certainly for the worſe: but to the author the merit or demerit of theſe ſmaller alterations appear to be of no moment, where the ſcheme itſelf is fundamentally vitious and abſurd.

value

value of a *mark of ſilver*. Of all theſe qualifying barriers we muſt think alike; that they are impotent to ſecure independence; ſtrong only to deſtroy the rights of men.

In all this proceſs, which in its fundamental elements affects to conſider only *population* upon a principle of natural right, there is a manifeſt attention to *property*; which, however juſt and reaſonable on other ſchemes, is on theirs perfectly unſupportable.

When they come to their third baſis, that of *Contribution*, we find that they have more completely loſt ſight of their rights of men. This laſt baſis reſts *entirely* on property. A principle totally different from the equality of men, and utterly irreconcileable to it, is thereby admitted; but no ſooner is this principle admitted, than (as uſual) it is ſubverted; and it is not ſubverted, (as we ſhall preſently ſee,) to approximate the inequality of riches to the level of nature. The additional ſhare in the third portion of repreſentation, (a portion reſerved excluſively for the higher contribution,) is made to regard the *diſtrict* only, and not the individuals in it who pay. It is eaſy to perceive, by the courſe of their reaſonings, how much they were embarraſſed by their contradictory ideas of the rights of men and the privileges of riches. The committee of conſtitution do as good as admit that they are wholly irreconcileable. "The relation, with regard to the "contributions, is without doubt *null* (ſay they) when the "queſtion is on the balance of the political rights as be-"tween individual and individual; without which *perſonal* "*equality would be deſtroyed*, and *an ariſtocracy of the rich* "would be eſtabliſhed. But this inconvenience entirely "diſappears when the proportional relation of the contri-"bution is only conſidered in the *great maſſes*, and is "ſolely between province and province; it ſerves in that "caſe only to form a juſt reciprocal proportion between

"the

" the cities, without affecting the perſonal rights of the " citizens."

Here the principle of *contribution*, as taken between man and man, is reprobated as *null*, and deſtructive to equality; and as pernicious too; becauſe it leads to the eſtabliſhment of an *ariſtocracy of the rich*. However, it muſt not be abandoned. And the way of getting rid of the difficulty is to eſtabliſh the inequality as between department and department, leaving all the individuals in each department upon an exact par. Obſerve, that this parity between individuals had been before deſtroyed when the qualifications within the departments were ſettled; nor does it ſeem a matter of great importance whether the equality of men be injured by maſſes or individually. An individual is not of the ſame importance in a maſs repreſented by a few, as in a maſs repreſented by many. It would be too much to tell a man jealous of his equality, that the elector has the ſame franchiſe who votes for three members as he who votes for ten.

Now take it in the other point of view, and let us ſuppoſe their principle of repreſentation according to contribution, that is according to riches, to be well imagined, and to be a neceſſary baſis for their republic. In this their third baſis they aſſume, that riches ought to be reſpected, and that juſtice and policy require that they ſhould entitle men, in ſome mode or other, to a larger ſhare in the adminiſtration of public affairs; it is now to be ſeen, how the aſſembly provides for the pre-eminence, or even for the ſecurity of the rich, by conferring, in virtue of their opulence, that larger meaſure of power to their diſtrict which is denied to them perſonally. I readily admit (indeed I ſhould lay it down as a fundamental principle) that in a republican government, which has a democratic baſis, the rich do require an additional ſecurity above what is neceſſary to them in mo-

narchies. They are ſubject to envy, and through envy to oppreſſion. On the preſent ſcheme, it is impoſſible to divine what advantage they derive from the ariſtocratic preference upon which the unequal repreſentation of the maſſes is founded. The rich cannot feel it, either as a ſupport to dignity, or as ſecurity to fortune: for the ariſtocratic maſs is generated from purely democratic principles; and the prevalence given to it in the general repreſentation has no ſort of reference to or connexion with the perſons, upon account of whoſe property this ſuperiority of the maſs is eſtabliſhed. If the contrivers of this ſcheme meant any ſort of favour to the rich in conſequence of their contribution, they ought to have conferred the privilege either on the individual rich, or on ſome claſs formed of rich perſons (as hiſtorians repreſent Servius Tullius to have done in the early conſtitution of Rome); becauſe the conteſt between the rich and the poor is not a ſtruggle between corporation and corporation, but a conteſt between men and men; a competition not between diſtricts but between deſcriptions. It would anſwer its purpoſe better if the ſcheme were inverted; that the votes of the maſſes were rendered equal; and that the votes within each maſs were proportioned to property.

Let us ſuppoſe one man in a diſtrict (it is an eaſy ſuppoſition) to contribute as much as an hundred of his neighbours. Againſt theſe he has but one vote. If there were but one repreſentative for the maſs, his poor neighbours would outvote him by an hundred to one for that ſingle repreſentative. Bad enough. But amends are to be made him. How? The diſtrict, in virtue of his wealth, is to chooſe, ſay, ten members inſtead of one: that is to ſay, by paying a very large contribution he has the happineſs of being outvoted, an hundred to one, by the poor for ten repreſentatives, inſtead of being outvoted exactly in the ſame

proportion

proportion for a ſingle member. In truth, inſtead of benefitting by this ſuperior quantity of repreſentation, the rich man is ſubjected to an additional hardſhip. The encreaſe of repreſentation within his province ſets up nine perſons more, and as many more than nine as there may be democratic candidates, to cabal and intrigue, and to flatter the people at his expence and to his oppreſſion. An intereſt is by this means held out to multitudes of the inferior ſort, in obtaining a ſalary of eighteen livres a day (to them a vaſt object) beſides the pleaſure of a reſidence in Paris and their ſhare in the government of the kingdom. The more the objects of ambition are multiplied and become democratic, juſt in that proportion the rich are endangered.

Thus it muſt fare between the poor and the rich in the province deemed ariſtocratic, which in its internal relation is the very reverſe of that character. In its external relation, that is, its relation to the other provinces, I cannot ſee how the unequal repreſentation, which is given to maſſes on account of wealth, becomes the means of preſerving the equipoiſe and the tranquillity of the commonwealth. For if it be one of the objects to ſecure the weak from being cruſhed by the ſtrong (as in all ſociety undoubtedly it is) how are the ſmaller and poorer of theſe maſſes to be ſaved from the tyranny of the more wealthy? Is it by adding to the wealthy further and more ſyſtematical means of oppreſſing them. When we come to a balance of repreſentation between corporate bodies, provincial intereſts, emulations, and jealouſies are full as likely to ariſe among them as among individuals; and their diviſions are likely to produce a much hotter ſpirit of diſſention, and ſomething leading much more nearly to a war.

I ſee that theſe ariſtocratic maſſes are made upon what is called the principle of direct contribution. Nothing can be

a more unequal ſtandard than this. The indirect contribution, that which ariſes from duties on conſumption, is in truth a better ſtandard, and follows and diſcovers wealth more naturally than this of direct contribution. It is difficult indeed to fix a ſtandard of local preference on account of the one, or of the other, or of both, becauſe ſome provinces may pay the more of either or of both, on account of cauſes not intrinſic, but originating from thoſe very diſtricts over whom they have obtained a preference in conſequence of their oſtenſible contribution. If the maſſes were independent ſovereign bodies, who were to provide for a federative treaſury by diſtinct contingents, and that the revenue had not (as it has) many impoſitions running through the whole, which affect men individually, and not corporately, and which, by their nature, confound all territorial limits, ſomething might be ſaid for the baſis of contribution as founded on maſſes. But of all things, this repreſentation, to be meaſured by contribution, is the moſt difficult to ſettle upon principles of equity in a country, which conſiders its diſtricts as members of an whole. For a great city, ſuch as Bourdeaux or Paris, appears to pay a vaſt body of duties, almoſt out of all aſſignable proportion to other places, and its maſs is conſidered accordingly. But are theſe cities the true contributors in that proportion? No. The conſumers of the commodities imported into Bourdeaux, who are ſcattered through all France, pay the import duties of Bourdeaux. The produce of the vintage in Guienne and Languedoc give to that city the means of its contribution growing out of an export commerce. The landholders who ſpend their eſtates in Paris, and are thereby the creators of that city, contribute for Paris from the provinces out of which their revenues ariſe. Very nearly the ſame arguments will apply to the repreſentative ſhare given on account of *direct* contribution: becauſe the

direct

direct contribution muſt be aſſeſſed on wealth real or preſumed; and that local wealth will itſelf ariſe from cauſes not local, and which therefore in equity ought not to produce a local preference.

It is very remarkable, that in this fundamental regulation, which ſettles the repreſentation of the maſs upon the direct contribution, they have not yet ſettled how that direct contribution ſhall be laid, and how apportioned. Perhaps there is ſome latent policy towards the continuance of the preſent aſſembly in this ſtrange procedure. However, until they do this, they can have no certain conſtitution. It muſt depend at laſt upon the ſyſtem of taxation, and muſt vary with every variation in that ſyſtem. As they have contrived matters, their taxation does not ſo much depend on their conſtitution, as their conſtitution on their taxation. This muſt introduce great confuſion among the maſſes; as the variable qualification for votes within the diſtrict muſt, if ever real conteſted elections take place, cauſe infinite internal controverſies.

To compare together the three baſes, not on their political reaſon, but on the ideas on which the aſſembly works, and to try its conſiſtency with itſelf, we cannot avoid obſerving, that the principle which the committee call the baſis of *population*, does not begin to operate from the ſame point with the two other principles called the baſes of *territory* and of *contribution*, which are both of an ariſtocratic nature. The conſequence is, that where all three begin to operate together, there is the moſt abſurd inequality produced by the operation of the former on the two latter principles. Every canton contains four ſquare leagues, and is eſtimated to contain, on the average, 4,000 inhabitants, or 680 voters in the *primary aſſemblies*, which vary in numbers with the population of

the canton, and ſend *one deputy* to the *commune* for every 200 voters. *Nine cantons* make a *commune*.

Now let us take *a canton* containing *a ſea-port town of trade*, or *a great manufacturing town*. Let us ſuppoſe the population of this canton to be 12,700 inhabitants, or 2,193 voters, forming *three primary aſſemblies*, and ſending *ten deputies* to the *commune*.

Oppoſe to this *one* canton *two* others of the remaining eight in the ſame commune. Theſe we may ſuppoſe to have their fair population of 4,000 inhabitants, and 680 voters each, or 8,000 inhabitants and 1,360 voters, both together. Theſe will form only *two primary aſſemblies*, and ſend only *ſix* deputies to the *commune*.

When the aſſembly of the *commune* comes to vote on the *baſis of territory*, which principle is firſt admitted to operate in that aſſembly, the *ſingle canton* which has *half* the territory of the *other two*, will have *ten* voices to *ſix* in the election of *three deputies* to the aſſembly of the department, choſen on the expreſs ground of a repreſentation of territory.

This inequality, ſtriking as it is, will be yet highly aggravated, if we ſuppoſe, as we fairly may, the *ſeveral* other cantons of the *commune* to fall proportionably ſhort of the average population, as much as the *principal canton* exceeds it. Now, as to *the baſis of contribution*, which alſo is a principle admitted firſt to operate in the aſſembly of the *commune*. Let us again take *one* canton, ſuch as is ſtated above. If the whole of the direct contributions paid by a great trading or manufacturing town be divided equally among the inhabitants, each individual will be found to pay much more than an individual living in the country according to the ſame average. The whole paid by the inhabi-

tants

tants of the former will be more than the whole paid by the inhabitants of the latter—we may fairly aſſume one-third more. Then the 12,700 inhabitants, or 2,193 voters of the canton will pay as much as 19,050 inhabitants, or 3,289 voters of the *other cantons*, which are nearly the eſtimated proportion of inhabitants and voters of *five* other cantons. Now the 2,193 voters will, as I before ſaid, ſend only *ten* deputies to the aſſembly; the 3,289 voters will ſend *ſixteen*. Thus, for an *equal* ſhare in the contribution of the whole *commune*, there will be a difference of *ſixteen* voices to *ten* in voting for deputies to be choſen on the principle of repreſenting the general contribution of the whole *commune*.

By the ſame mode of computation we ſhall find 15,875 inhabitants, or 2,741 voters of the *other* cantons, who pay *one-ſixth* LESS to the contribution of the whole *commune*, will have *three* voices MORE than the 12,700 inhabitants, or 2,193 voters of the *one* canton.

Such is the fantaſtical and unjuſt inequality between maſs and maſs, in this curious repartition of the rights of repreſentation ariſing out of *territory* and *contribution*. The qualifications which theſe confer are in truth negative qualifications, that give a right in an inverſe proportion to the poſſeſſion of them.

In this whole contrivance of the three baſes, conſider it in any light you pleaſe, I do not ſee a variety of objects, reconciled in one conſiſtent whole, but ſeveral contradictory principles reluctantly and irreconcileably brought and held together by your philoſophers, like wild beaſts ſhut up in a cage, to claw and bite each other to their mutual deſtruction.

I am afraid I have gone too far into their way of conſidering the formation of a conſtitution. They have much, but bad, metaphyſics; much, but bad, geometry; much, but falſe,

falſe, proportionate arithmetic; but if it were all as exact as metaphyſics, geometry, and arithmetic ought to be, and if their ſchemes were perfectly conſiſtent in all their parts, it would make only a more fair and ſightly viſion. It is remarkable, that in a great arrangement of mankind, not one reference whatſoever is to be found to any thing moral or any thing politic; nothing that relates to the concerns, the actions, the paſſions, the intereſts of men. *Hominem non ſapiunt.*

You ſee I only conſider this conſtitution as electoral, and leading by ſteps to the national aſſembly. I do not enter into the internal government of the departments, and their genealogy through the communes and cantons. Theſe local governments are, in the original plan, to be as nearly as poſſible compoſed in the ſame manner and on the ſame principles with the elective aſſemblies. They are each of them bodies perfectly compact and rounded in themſelves.

You cannot but perceive in this ſcheme, that it has a direct and immediate tendency to ſever France into a variety of republics, and to render them totally independent of each other, without any direct conſtitutional means of coherence, connexion, or ſubordination, except what may be derived from their acquieſcence in the determinations of the general congreſs of the ambaſſadors from each independent republic. Such in reality is the national aſſembly, and ſuch governments I admit do exiſt in the world, though in forms infinitely more ſuitable to the local and habitual circumſtances of their people. But ſuch aſſociations, rather than bodies politic, have generally been the effect of neceſſity, not choice; and I believe the preſent French power is the very firſt body of citizens, who, having obtained full authority to do with their country what they pleaſed, have choſen to diſſever it in this barbarous manner.

It

It is impoſſible not to obſerve, that in the ſpirit of this geometrical diſtribution, and arithmetical arrangement, theſe pretended citizens treat France exactly like a country of conqueſt. Acting as conquerors, they have imitated the policy of the harſheſt of that harſh race. The policy of ſuch barbarous victors, who contemn a ſubdued people, and inſult their feelings, has ever been, as much as in them lay, to deſtroy all veſtiges of the antient country, in religion, in polity, in laws, and in manners; to confound all territorial limits; to produce a general poverty; to put up their properties to auction; to cruſh their princes, nobles, and pontiffs; to lay low every thing which had lifted its head above the level, or which could ſerve to combine or rally, in their diſtreſſes, the diſbanded people, under the ſtandard of old opinion. They have made France free in the manner in which thoſe ſincere friends to the rights of mankind, the Romans, freed Greece, Macedon, and other nations. They deſtroyed the bonds of their union, under colour of providing for the independence of each of their cities.

When the members who compoſe theſe new bodies of cantons, communes, and departments, arrangements purpoſely produced through the medium of confuſion, begin to act, they will find themſelves, in a great meaſure, ſtrangers to one another. The electors and elected throughout, eſpecially in the rural *cantons*, will be frequently without any civil habitudes or connexions, or any of that natural diſcipline which is the ſoul of a true republic. Magiſtrates and collectors of revenue are now no longer acquainted with their diſtricts, biſhops with their dioceſes, or curates with their pariſhes. Theſe new colonies of the rights of men bear a ſtrong reſemblance to that ſort of military colonies which Tacitus has obſerved upon in the declining policy of Rome. In better and wiſer days (whatever courſe they took with

foreign nations) they were careful to make the elements of a methodical ſubordination and ſettlement to be coeval; and even to lay the foundations of civil diſcipline in the military *. But, when all the good arts had fallen into ruin, they proceeded, as your aſſembly does, upon the equality of men, and with as little judgment, and as little care for thoſe things which make a republic tolerable or durable. But in this, as well as almoſt every inſtance, your new commonwealth is born, and bred, and fed, in thoſe corruptions which mark degenerated and worn out republics. Your child comes into the world with the ſymptoms of death; the *facies Hippocratica* forms the character of its phyſiognomy, and the prognoſtic of its fate.

The legiſlators who framed the antient republics knew that their buſineſs was too arduous to be accompliſhed with no better apparatus than the metaphyſics of an under-graduate, and the mathematics and arithmetic of an exciſeman. They had to do with men, and they were obliged to ſtudy human nature. They had to do with citizens, and they were obliged to ſtudy the effects of thoſe habits which are communicated by the circumſtances of civil life. They were ſenſible that the operation of this ſecond nature on the firſt produced a new combination; and thence aroſe many diverſities amongſt men, according to their birth, their education, their profeſſions, the periods of their lives, their reſidence in towns or in the country, their ſeveral ways of acquiring and of fixing property, and according to the quality of the property itſelf, all which rendered them as it were ſo many different ſpecies

* Non, ut olim, univerſæ legiones deducebantur cum tribunis, et centurionibus, et ſui cujuſque ordinis militibus, ut conſenſu et caritate rempublicam afficerent; ſed ignoti inter ſe, diverſis manipulis, ſine rectore, ſine affectibus mutuis, quaſi ex alio genere mortalium, repente in unum collecti, numerus magis quam colonia. Tac. Annal. l. 14. ſect. 27. All this will be ſtill more applicable to the unconnected, rotatory, biennial national aſſemblies, in this abſurd and ſenſeleſs conſtitution.

of

of animals. From hence they thought themſelves obliged to diſpoſe their citizens into ſuch claſſes, and to place them in ſuch ſituations in the ſtate as their peculiar habits might qualify them to fill, and to allot to them ſuch appropriated privileges as might ſecure to them what their ſpecific occaſions required, and which might furniſh to each deſcription ſuch force as might protect it in the conflict cauſed by the diverſity of intereſts, that muſt exiſt, and muſt contend in all complex ſociety: for the legiſlator would have been aſhamed, that the coarſe huſbandman ſhould well know how to aſſort and to uſe his ſheep, horſes, and oxen, and ſhould have enough of common ſenſe not to abſtract and equalize them all into animals, without providing for each kind an appropriate food, care, and employment; whilſt he, the œconomiſt, diſpoſer, and ſhepherd of his own kindred, ſubliming himſelf into an airy metaphyſician, was reſolved to know nothing of his flocks but as men in general. It is for this reaſon that Monteſquieu obſerved very juſtly, that in their claſſification of the citizens, the great legiſlators of antiquity made the greateſt diſplay of their powers, and even ſoared above themſelves. It is here that your modern legiſlators have gone deep into the negative ſeries, and ſunk even below their own nothing. As the firſt ſort of legiſlators attended to the different kinds of citizens, and combined them into one commonwealth, the others, the metaphyſical and alchemiſtical legiſlators, have taken the direct contrary courſe. They have attempted to confound all ſorts of citizens, as well as they could, into one homogeneous maſs; and then they divided this their amalgama into a number of incoherent republics. They reduce men to looſe counters merely for the ſake of ſimple telling, and not to figures whoſe power is to ariſe from their place in the table. The elements of their own metaphyſics might have taught them

better leſſons. The troll of their categorical table might have informed them that there was ſomething elſe in the intellectual world beſides *ſubſtance* and *quantity*. They might learn from the catechiſm of metaphyſics that there were eight heads more *, in every complex deliberation, which they have never thought of, though theſe, of all the ten, are the ſubject on which the ſkill of man can operate any thing at all.

So far from this able diſpoſition of ſome of the old republican legiſlators, which follows with a ſolicitous accuracy, the moral conditions and propenſities of men, they have levelled and cruſhed together all the orders which they found, even under the coarſe unartificial arrangement of the monarchy, in which mode of government the claſſing of the citizens is not of ſo much importance as in a republic. It is true, however, that every ſuch claſſification, if properly ordered, is good in all forms of government; and compoſes a ſtrong barrier againſt the exceſſes of deſpotiſm, as well as it is the neceſſary means of giving effect and permanence to a republic. For want of ſomething of this kind, if the preſent project of a republic ſhould fail, all ſecurities to a moderated freedom fail along with it; all the indirect reſtraints which mitigate deſpotiſm are removed; inſomuch that if monarchy ſhould ever again obtain an entire aſcendency in France, under this or under any other dynaſty, it will probably be, if not voluntarily tempered at ſetting out, by the wiſe and virtuous counſels of the prince, the moſt completely arbitrary power that has ever appeared on earth. This is to play a moſt deſperate game.

The confuſion, which attends on all ſuch proceedings, they even declare to be one of their objects, and they hope to ſecure their conſtitution by a terror of a return of thoſe

* Qualitas, Relatio, Actio, Paſſio, Ubi, Quando, Situs, Habitus.

evils

evils which attended their making it. "By this," ſay they, "its deſtruction will become difficult to authority, which "cannot break it up without the entire diſorganization of "the whole ſtate." They preſume, that if this authority ſhould ever come to the ſame degree of power that they have acquired, it would make a more moderate and chaſtiſed uſe of it, and would piouſly tremble entirely to diſorganize the ſtate in the ſavage manner that they have done. They expect, from the virtues of returning deſpotiſm, the ſecurity which is to be enjoyed by the offſpring of their popular vices.

I wiſh, Sir, that you and my readers would give an attentive peruſal to the work of M. de Calonne, on this ſubject. It is indeed not only an eloquent but an able and inſtructive performance. I confine myſelf to what he ſays relative to the conſtitution of the new ſtate, and to the condition of the revenue. As to the diſputes of this miniſter with his rivals, I do not wiſh to pronounce upon them. As little do I mean to hazard any opinion concerning his ways and means, financial or political, for taking his country out of its preſent diſgraceful and deplorable ſituation of ſervitude, anarchy, bankruptcy, and beggary. I cannot ſpeculate quite ſo ſanguinely as he does: but he is a Frenchman, and has a cloſer duty relative to thoſe objects, and better means of judging of them, than I can have. I wiſh that the formal avowal which he refers to, made by one of the principal leaders in the aſſembly, concerning the tendency of their ſcheme to bring France not only from a monarchy to a republic, but from a republic to a mere confederacy, may be very particularly attended to. It adds new force to my obſervations; and indeed M. de Calonne's work ſupplies my deficiencies by many new

new and ſtriking arguments on moſt of the ſubjects of this Letter *.

It is this reſolution, to break their country into ſeparate republics, which has driven them into the greateſt number of their difficulties and contradictions. If it were not for this, all the queſtions of exact equality, and theſe balances, never to be ſettled, of individual rights, population, and contribution, would be wholly uſeleſs. The repreſentation, though derived from parts, would be a duty which equally regarded the whole. Each deputy to the aſſembly would be the repreſentative of France, and of all its deſcriptions, of the many and of the few, of the rich and of the poor, of the great diſtricts and of the ſmall. All theſe diſtricts would themſelves be ſubordinate to ſome ſtanding authority, exiſting independently of them; an authority in which their repreſentation, and every thing that belongs to it, originated, and to which it was pointed. This ſtanding, unalterable, fundamental government would make, and it is the only thing which could make, that territory truly and properly an whole. With us, when we elect popular repreſentatives, we ſend them to a council, in which each man individually is a ſubject, and ſubmitted to a government complete in all its ordinary functions. With you the elective aſſembly is the ſovereign, and the ſole ſovereign: all the members are therefore integral parts of this ſole ſovereignty. But with us it is totally different. With us the repreſentative, ſeparated from the other parts, can have no action and no exiſtence. The government is the point of reference of the ſeveral members and diſtricts of our repreſentation. This is the center of our unity. This government of reference is a truſtee for the *whole*, and not for the parts. So is the other

* See L'Etat de la France, p. 363.

branch

branch of our public council, I mean the houſe of lords. With us the king and the lords are ſeveral and joint ſecurities for the equality of each diſtrict, each province, each city. When did you hear in Great Britain of any province ſuffering from the inequality of its repreſentation; what diſtrict from having no repreſentation at all? Not only our monarchy and our peerage ſecure the equality on which our unity depends, but it is the ſpirit of the houſe of commons itſelf. The very inequality of repreſentation, which is ſo fooliſhly complained of, is perhaps the very thing which prevents us from thinking or acting as members for diſtricts. Cornwall elects as many members as all Scotland. But is Cornwall better taken care of than Scotland? Few trouble their heads about any of your baſes, out of ſome giddy clubs. Moſt of thoſe, who wiſh for any change, upon any plauſible grounds, deſire it on different ideas.

Your new conſtitution is the very reverſe of ours in its principle; and I am aſtoniſhed how any perſons could dream of holding out any thing done in it as an example for Great Britain. With you there is little, or rather no, connexion between the laſt repreſentative and the firſt conſtituent. The member who goes to the national aſſembly is not choſen by the people, nor accountable to them. There are three elections before he is choſen: two ſets of magiſtracy intervene between him and the primary aſſembly, ſo as to render him, as I have ſaid, an ambaſſador of a ſtate, and not the repreſentative of the people within a ſtate. By this the whole ſpirit of the election is changed; nor can any corrective your conſtitution-mongers have deviſed render him any thing elſe than what he is. The very attempt to do it would inevitably introduce a confuſion, if poſſible, more horrid than the preſent. There is no way to make a connexion between the original conſtituent and the repreſentative,

tive, but by the circuitous means which may lead the candidate to apply in the firſt inſtance to the primary electors, in order that by their authoritative inſtructions (and ſomething more perhaps) theſe primary electors may force the two ſucceeding bodies of electors to make a choice agreeable to their wiſhes. But this would plainly ſubvert the whole ſcheme. It would be to plunge them back into that tumult and confuſion of popular election, which, by their interpoſed gradation elections, they mean to avoid, and at length to riſque the whole fortune of the ſtate with thoſe who have the leaſt knowledge of it, and the leaſt intereſt in it. This is a perpetual dilemma, into which they are thrown by the vicious, weak, and contradictory principles they have choſen. Unleſs the people break up and level this gradation, it is plain that they do not at all ſubſtantially elect to the aſſembly; indeed they elect as little in appearance as reality.

What is it we all ſeek for in an election? To anſwer its real purpoſes, you muſt firſt poſſeſs the means of knowing the fitneſs of your man; and then you muſt retain ſome hold upon him by perſonal obligation or dependence. For what end are theſe primary electors complimented, or rather mocked, with a choice? They can never know any thing of the qualities of him that is to ſerve them, nor has he any obligation whatſoever to them. Of all the powers unfit to be delegated by thoſe who have any real means of judging, that moſt peculiarly unfit is what relates to a *perſonal* choice. In caſe of abuſe, that body of primary electors never can call the repreſentative to an account for his conduct. He is too far removed from them in the chain of repreſentation. If he acts improperly at the end of his two years leaſe, it does not concern him for two years more. By the new French conſtitution, the beſt and the wiſeſt repreſentatives go equally with the worſt into this *Limbus Patrum*. Their bottoms are

ſuppoſed foul, and they muſt go into dock to be refitted. Every man who has ſerved in an aſſembly is ineligible for two years after. Juſt as theſe magiſtrates begin to learn their trade, like chimney-ſweepers, they are diſqualified for exerciſing it. Superficial, new, petulant acquiſition, and interrupted, droniſh, broken, ill recollection, is to be the deſtined character of all your future governors. Your conſtitution has too much of jealouſy to have much of ſenſe in it. You conſider the breach of truſt in the repreſentative ſo principally, that you do not at all regard the queſtion of his fitneſs to execute it.

This purgatory interval is not unfavourable to a faithleſs repreſentative, who may be as good a canvaſſer as he was a bad governor. In this time he may cabal himſelf into a ſuperiority over the wiſeſt and moſt virtuous. As, in the end, all the members of this elective conſtitution are equally fugitive, and exiſt only for the election, they may be no longer the ſame perſons who had choſen him, to whom he is to be reſponſible when he ſolicits for a renewal of his truſt. To call all the ſecondary electors of the *Commune* to account, is ridiculous, impracticable, and unjuſt; they may themſelves have been deceived in their choice, as the third ſet of electors, thoſe of the *Department*, may be in theirs. In your elections reſponſibility cannot exiſt.

Finding no ſort of principle of coherence with each other in the nature and conſtitution of the ſeveral new republics of France, I conſidered what cement the legiſlators had provided for them from any extraneous materials. Their confederations, their *ſpectacles*, their civic feaſts, and their enthuſiaſm, I take no notice of; they are nothing but mere tricks; but tracing their policy through their actions, I think I can diſtinguiſh the arrangements by which they propoſe to hold theſe republics together. The firſt, is the

confiſcation, with the compulſory paper currency annexed to it; the ſecond, is the ſupreme power of the city of Paris; the third, is the general army of the ſtate. Of this laſt I ſhall reſerve what I have to ſay, until I come to conſider the army as an head by itſelf.

As to the operation of the firſt (the confiſcation and paper currency) merely as a cement, I cannot deny that theſe, the one depending on the other, may for ſome time compoſe ſome ſort of cement, if their madneſs and folly in the management, and in the tempering of the parts together, does not produce a repulſion in the very outſet. But allowing to the ſcheme ſome coherence and ſome duration, it appears to me, that if, after a while, the confiſcation ſhould not be found ſufficient to ſupport the paper coinage (as I am morally certain it will not) then, inſtead of cementing, it will add infinitely to the diſſociation, diſtraction, and confuſion of theſe confederate republics, both with relation to each other, and to the ſeveral parts within themſelves. But if the confiſcation ſhould ſo far ſucceed as to ſink the paper currency, the cement is gone with the circulation. In the mean time its binding force will be very uncertain, and it will ſtraiten or relax with every variation in the credit of the paper.

One thing only is certain in this ſcheme, which is an effect ſeemingly collateral, but direct, I have no doubt, in the minds of thoſe who conduct this buſineſs, that is, its effect in producing an *Oligarchy* in every one of the republics. A paper circulation, not founded on any real money depoſited or engaged for, amounting already to four-and-forty millions of Engliſh money, and this currency by force ſubſtituted in the place of the coin of the kingdom, becoming thereby the ſubſtance of its revenue, as well as the medium of all its commercial and civil intercourſe, muſt put the

whole of what power, authority, and influence is left, in any form whatſoever it may aſſume, into the hands of the managers and conductors of this circulation.

In England we feel the influence of the bank; though it is only the center of a voluntary dealing. He knows little indeed of the influence of money upon mankind, who does not ſee the force of the management of a monied concern, which is ſo much more extenſive, and in its nature ſo much more depending on the managers than any of ours. But this is not merely a money concern. There is another member in the ſyſtem inſeparably connected with this money management. It conſiſts in the means of drawing out at diſcretion portions of the confiſcated lands for ſale; and carrying on a proceſs of continual tranſmutation of paper into land, and land into paper. When we follow this proceſs in its effects, we may conceive ſomething of the intenſity of the force with which this ſyſtem muſt operate. By this means the ſpirit of money-jobbing and ſpeculation goes into the maſs of land itſelf, and incorporates with it. By this kind of operation, that ſpecies of property becomes (as it were) volatilized; it aſſumes an unnatural and monſtrous activity, and thereby throws into the hands of the ſeveral managers, principal and ſubordinate, Pariſian and provincial, all the repreſentative of money, and perhaps a full tenth part of all the land in France, which has now acquired the worſt and moſt pernicious part of the evil of a paper circulation, the greateſt poſſible uncertainty in its value. They have reverſed the Latonian kindneſs to the landed property of Delos. They have ſent theirs to be blown about, like the light fragments of a wreck, *oras et littora circum.*

The new dealers being all habitually adventurers, and without any fixed habits or local predilections, will purchaſe to job out again, as the market of paper, or of money, or of land ſhall preſent an advantage. For though an holy biſhop

thinks that agriculture will derive great advantages from the "*enlightened*" uſurers who are to purchaſe the church confiſcations, I, who am not a good, but an old farmer, with great humility beg leave to tell his late lordſhip, that uſury is not a tutor of agriculture; and if the word "enlightened" be underſtood according to the new dictionary, as it always is in your new ſchools, I cannot conceive how a man's not believing in God can teach him to cultivate the earth with the leaſt of any additional ſkill or encouragement. "Diis immortalibus fero," ſaid an old Roman, when he held one handle of the plough, whilſt Death held the other. Though you were to join in the commiſſion all the directors of the two academies to the directors of the *Caiſſe d'Eſcompte*, one old experienced peaſant is worth them all. I have got more information, upon a curious and intereſting branch of huſbandry, in one ſhort converſation with a Carthuſian monk, than I have derived from all the Bank directors that I have ever converſed with. However, there is no cauſe for apprehenſion from the meddling of money-dealers with rural œconomy. Theſe gentlemen are too wiſe in their generation. At firſt, perhaps, their tender and ſuſceptible imaginations may be captivated with the innocent and unprofitable delights of a paſtoral life; but in a little time they will find that agriculture is a trade much more laborious, and much leſs lucrative than that which they had left. After making its panegyric, they will turn their backs on it like their great precurſor and prototype.—They may, like him, begin by ſinging "*Beatus ille*"—but what will be the end?

Hæc ubi locutus fœnerator Alphius,
Jam jam futurus ruſticus
Omnem relegit idibus pecuniam,
Quærit calendis ponere

They

They will cultivate the *caiſſe d'Egliſe*, under the ſacred auſpices of this prelate, with much more profit than its vineyards or its corn-fields. They will employ their talents according to their habits and their intereſts. They will not follow the plough whilſt they can direct treaſuries, and govern provinces.

Your legiſlators, in every thing new, are the very firſt who have founded a commonwealth upon gaming, and infuſed this ſpirit into it as its vital breath. The great object in theſe politics is to metamorphoſe France, from a great kingdom into one great play-table; to turn its inhabitants into a nation of gameſters; to make ſpeculation as extenſive as life; to mix it with all its concerns; and to divert the whole of the hopes and fears of the people from their uſual channels, into the impulſes, paſſions, and ſuperſtitions of thoſe who live on chances. They loudly proclaim their opinion, that this their preſent ſyſtem of a republic cannot poſſibly exiſt without this kind of gaming fund; and that the very thread of its life is ſpun out of the ſtaple of theſe ſpeculations. The old gaming in funds was miſchievous enough undoubtedly; but it was ſo only to individuals. Even when it had its greateſt extent, in the Miſſiſſippi and South Sea, it affected but few, comparatively; where it extends further, as in lotteries, the ſpirit has but a ſingle object. But where the law, which in moſt circumſtances forbids, and in none countenances gaming, is itſelf debauched, ſo as to reverſe its nature and policy, and expreſsly to force the ſubject to this deſtructive table, by bringing the ſpirit and ſymbols of gaming into the minuteſt matters, and engaging every body in it, and in every thing, a more dreadful epidemic diſtemper of that kind is ſpread than yet has appeared in the world. With you a man can neither earn nor buy his dinner, without a ſpeculation. What he

receives

receives in the morning will not have the ſame value at night. What he is compelled to take as pay for an old debt, will not be received as the ſame when he comes to pay a debt contracted by himſelf; nor will it be the ſame when by prompt payment he would avoid contracting any debt at all. Induſtry muſt wither away. Œconomy muſt be driven from your country. Careful proviſion will have no exiſtence. Who will labour without knowing the amount of his pay? Who will ſtudy to encreaſe what none can eſtimate? who will accumulate, when he does not know the value of what he ſaves? If you abſtract it from its uſes in gaming, to accumulate your paper wealth, would be not the providence of a man, but the diſtempered inſtinct of a jackdaw.

The truly melancholy part of the policy of ſyſtematically making a nation of gameſters is this; that though all are forced to play, few can underſtand the game; and fewer ſtill are in a condition to avail themſelves of the knowledge. The many muſt be the dupes of the few who conduct the machine of theſe ſpeculations. What effect it muſt have on the country-people is viſible. The townſman can calculate from day to day: not ſo the inhabitant of the country. When the peaſant firſt brings his corn to market, the magiſtrate in the towns obliges him to take the aſſignat at par; when he goes to the ſhop with this money, he finds it ſeven per cent. the worſe for croſſing the way. This market he will not readily reſort to again. The towns-people will be inflamed! they will force the country-people to bring their corn. Reſiſtance will begin, and the murders of Paris and St. Dennis may be renewed through all France.

What ſignifies the empty compliment paid to the country by giving it perhaps more than its ſhare in the theory of your repreſentation? Where have you placed the real power

over

over monied and landed circulation? Where have you placed the means of raiſing and falling the value of every man's freehold? Thoſe whoſe operations can take from, or add ten per cent. to, the poſſeſſions of every man in France, muſt be the maſters of every man in France. The whole of the power obtained by this revolution will ſettle in the towns among the burghers, and the monied directors who lead them. The landed gentleman, the yeoman, and the peaſant have, none of them, habits, or inclinations, or experience, which can lead them to any ſhare in this the ſole ſource of power and influence now left in France. The very nature of a country life, the very nature of landed property, in all the occupations, and all the pleaſures they afford, render combination and arrangement (the ſole way of procuring and exerting influence) in a manner impoſſible amongſt country-people. Combine them by all the art you can, and all the induſtry, they are always diſſolving into individuality. Any thing in the nature of incorporation is almoſt impracticable amongſt them. Hope, fear, alarm, jealouſy, the ephemerous tale that does its buſineſs and dies in a day, all theſe things, which are the reins and ſpurs by which leaders check or urge the minds of followers, are not eaſily employed, or hardly at all, amongſt ſcattered people. They aſſemble, they arm, they act with the utmoſt difficulty, and at the greateſt charge. Their efforts, if ever they can be commenced, cannot be ſuſtained. They cannot proceed ſyſtematically. If the country gentlemen attempt an influence through the mere income of their property, what is it to that of thoſe who have ten times their income to ſell, and who can ruin their property by bringing their plunder to meet it at market. If the landed man wiſhes to mortgage, he falls the value of his land, and raiſes the value of aſſignats. He augments the power of his enemy by the very means

means he muſt take to contend with him. The country gentleman therefore, the officer by ſea and land, the man of liberal views and habits, attached to no profeſſion, will be as completely excluded from the government of his country as if he were legiſlatively proſcribed. It is obvious, that in the towns, all the things which conſpire againſt the country gentleman, combine in favour of the money manager and director. In towns combination is natural. The habits of burghers, their occupations, their diverſion, their buſineſs, their idleneſs, continually bring them into mutual contact. Their virtues and their vices are ſociable; they are always in garriſon; and they come embodied and half diſciplined into the hands of thoſe who mean to form them for civil or for military action.

All theſe conſiderations leave no doubt on my mind, that if this monſter of a conſtitution can continue, France will be wholly governed by the agitators in corporations, by ſocieties in the towns formed of directors of aſſignats, and truſtees for the ſale of church lands, attornies, agents, money-jobbers, ſpeculators, and adventurers, compoſing an ignoble oligarchy founded on the deſtruction of the crown, the church, the nobility, and the people. Here end all the deceitful dreams and viſions of the equality and rights of men. In "the Serbonian bog" of this baſe oligarchy they are all abſorbed, ſunk, and loſt for ever.

Though human eyes cannot trace them, one would be tempted to think ſome great offences in France muſt cry to heaven, which has thought fit to puniſh it with a ſubjection to a vile and inglorious domination, in which no comfort or compenſation is to be found in any, even of thoſe falſe ſplendours, which, playing about other tyrannies, prevent mankind from feeling themſelves diſhonoured even whilſt they are oppreſſed. I muſt confeſs I am touched with a

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ſorrow, mixed with ſome indignation, at the conduct of a few men, once of great rank, and ſtill of great character, who, deluded with ſpecious names, have engaged in a buſineſs too deep for the line of their underſtanding to fathom; who have lent their fair reputation, and the authority of their high-ſounding names, to the deſigns of men with whom they could not be acquainted; and have thereby made their very virtues operate to the ruin of their country.

So far as to the firſt cementing principle.

The ſecond material of cement for their new republic is the ſuperiority of the city of Paris; and this I admit is ſtrongly connected with the other cementing principle of paper circulation and confiſcation. It is in this part of the project we muſt look for the cauſe of the deſtruction of all the old bounds of provinces and juriſdictions, eccleſiaſtical and ſecular, and the diſſolution of all antient combinations of things, as well as the formation of ſo many ſmall unconnected republics. The power of the city of Paris is evidently one great ſpring of all their politics. It is through the power of Paris, now become the center and focus of jobbing, that the leaders of this faction direct, or rather command, the whole legiſlative and the whole executive government. Every thing therefore muſt be done which can confirm the authority of that city over the other republics. Paris is compact; ſhe has an enormous ſtrength, wholly diſproportioned to the force of any of the ſquare republics; and this ſtrength is collected and condenſed within a narrow compaſs. Paris has a natural and eaſy connexion of its parts, which will not be affected by any ſcheme of a geometrical conſtitution, nor does it much ſignify whether its proportion of repreſentation be more or leſs, ſince it has the whole draft of fiſhes in its drag-net. The other diviſions of the kingdom

being hackled and torn to pieces, and ſeparated from all their habitual means, and even principles of union, cannot, for ſome time at leaſt, confederate againſt her. Nothing was to be left in all the ſubordinate members, but weakneſs, diſconnexion, and confuſion. To confirm this part of the plan, the aſſembly has lately come to a reſolution, that no two of their republics ſhall have the ſame commander in chief.

To a perſon who takes a view of the whole, the ſtrength of Paris thus formed, will appear a ſyſtem of general weakneſs. It is boaſted, that the geometrical policy has been adopted, that all local ideas ſhould be ſunk, and that the people ſhould no longer be Gaſcons, Picards, Bretons, Normans, but Frenchmen, with one country, one heart, and one aſſembly. But inſtead of being all Frenchmen, the greater likelihood is, that the inhabitants of that region will ſhortly have no country. No man ever was attached by a ſenſe of pride, partiality, or real affection, to a deſcription of ſquare meaſurement. He never will glory in belonging to the Checquer, N° 71, or to any other badge-ticket. We begin our public affections in our families. No cold relation is a zealous citizen. We paſs on to our neighbourhoods, and our habitual provincial connexions. Theſe are inns and reſting-places. Such diviſions of our country as have been formed by habit, and not by a ſudden jerk of authority, were ſo many little images of the great country in which the heart found ſomething which it could fill. The love to the whole is not extinguiſhed by this ſubordinate partiality. Perhaps it is a ſort of elemental training to thoſe higher and more large regards, by which alone men come to be affected, as with their own concern, in the proſperity of a kingdom ſo extenſive as that of France. In that general territory itſelf, as in the old name of provinces, the citizens are intereſted from old prejudices

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and unreaſoned habits, and not on account of the geometric properties of its figure. The power and preeminence of Paris does certainly preſs down and hold theſe republics together as long as it laſts. But, for the reaſons I have already given you, I think it cannot laſt very long.

Paſſing from the civil creating, and the civil cementing principles of this conſtitution, to the national aſſembly, which is to appear and act as ſovereign, we ſee a body in its conſtitution with every poſſible power, and no poſſible external controul. We ſee a body without fundamental laws, without eſtabliſhed maxims, without reſpected rules of proceeding, which nothing can keep firm to any ſyſtem whatſoever. Their idea of their powers is always taken at the utmoſt ſtretch of legiſlative competency, and their examples for common caſes, from the exceptions of the moſt urgent neceſſity. The future is to be in moſt reſpects like the preſent aſſembly; but, by the mode of the new elections and the tendency of the new circulations, it will be purged of the ſmall degree of internal controul exiſting in a minority choſen originally from various intereſts, and preſerving ſomething of their ſpirit. If poſſible, the next aſſembly muſt be worſe than the preſent. The preſent, by deſtroying and altering every thing, will leave to their ſucceſſors apparently nothing popular to do. They will be rouſed by emulation and example to enterpriſes the boldeſt and the moſt abſurd. To ſuppoſe ſuch an aſſembly ſitting in perfect quietude is ridiculous.

Your all-ſufficient legiſlators, in their hurry to do every thing at once, have forgot one thing that ſeems eſſential, and which, I believe, never has been before, in the theory or the practice, omitted by any projector of a republic. They have forgot to conſtitute a *ſenate*, or ſomething of that nature and character. Never, before this time, was heard of a body politic compoſed of one legiſlative and active aſ-

ſembly, and its executive officers, without ſuch a council; without ſomething to which foreign ſtates might connect themſelves; ſomething to which, in the ordinary detail of government, the people could look up; ſomething which might give a bias and ſteadineſs, and preſerve ſomething like conſiſtency in the proceedings of ſtate. Such a body kings generally have as a council. A monarchy may exiſt without it; but it ſeems to be in the very eſſence of a republican government. It holds a ſort of middle place between the ſupreme power exerciſed by the people, or immediately delegated from them, and the mere executive. Of this there are no traces in your conſtitution; and in providing nothing of this kind, your Solons and Numas have, as much as in any thing elſe, diſcovered a ſovereign incapacity.

Let us now turn our eyes to what they have done towards the formation of an executive power. For this they have choſen a degraded king. This their firſt executive officer is to be a machine, without any ſort of deliberative diſcretion in any one act of his function. At beſt he is but a channel to convey to the national aſſembly ſuch matter as may import that body to know. If he had been made the excluſive channel, the power would not have been without its importance; though infinitely perilous to thoſe who would chooſe to exerciſe it. But public intelligence and ſtatement of facts may paſs to the aſſembly, with equal authenticity, through any other conveyance. As to the means, therefore, of giving a direction to meaſures by the ſtatement of an authorized reporter, this office of intelligence is as nothing.

To conſider the French ſcheme of an executive officer in its two natural diviſions of civil and political—In the firſt it muſt be obſerved, that, according to the new conſtitution, the higher parts of judicature, in either of its lines, are not

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in the king. The king of France is not the fountain of juſtice. The judges, neither the original nor the appellate, are of his nomination. He neither propoſes the candidates, nor has a negative on the choice. He is not even the public proſecutor. He ſerves only as a notary to authenticate the choice made of the judges in the ſeveral diſtricts. By his officers he is to execute their ſentence. When we look into the true nature of his authority, he appears to be nothing more than a chief of bumbailiffs, ſerjeants at mace, catchpoles, jailers, and hangmen. It is impoſſible to place any thing called royalty in a more degrading point of view. A thouſand times better it had been for the dignity of this unhappy prince, that he had nothing at all to do with the adminiſtration of juſtice, deprived as he is of all that is venerable, and all that is conſolatory in that function, without power of originating any proceſs; without a power of ſuſpenſion, mitigation, or pardon. Every thing in juſtice that is vile and odious is thrown upon him. It was not for nothing that the aſſembly has been at ſuch pains to remove the ſtigma from certain offices, when they were reſolved to place the perſon who lately had been their king in a ſituation but one degree above the executioner, and in an office nearly of the ſame quality. It is not in nature, that ſituated as the king of the French now is, he can reſpect himſelf, or can be reſpected by others.

View this new executive officer on the ſide of his political capacity, as he acts under the orders of the national aſſembly. To execute laws is a royal office; to execute orders is not to be a king. However, a political executive magiſtracy, though merely ſuch, is a great truſt. It is a truſt indeed that has much depending upon its faithful and diligent performance, both in the perſon preſiding in it and in all his ſubordinates. Means of performing this duty ought to be given

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by regulation; and diſpoſitions towards it ought to be infuſed by the circumſtances attendant on the truſt. It ought to be environed with dignity, authority, and conſideration, and it ought to lead to glory. The office of execution is an office of exertion. It is not from impotence we are to expect the taſks of power. What ſort of perſon is a king to command executory ſervice, who has no means whatſoever to reward it? Not in a permanent office; not in a grant of land; no, not in a penſion of fifty pounds a year; not in the vaineſt and moſt trivial title. In France the king is no more the fountain of honour than he is the fountain of juſtice. All rewards, all diſtinctions are in other hands. Thoſe who ſerve the king can be actuated by no natural motive but fear; by a fear of every thing except their maſter. His functions of internal coercion are as odious, as thoſe which he exerciſes in the department of juſtice. If relief is to be given to any municipality, the aſſembly gives it. If troops are to be ſent to reduce them to obedience to the aſſembly, the king is to execute the order; and upon every occaſion he is to be ſpattered over with the blood of his people. He has no negative; yet his name and authority is uſed to enforce every harſh decree. Nay, he muſt concur in the butchery of thoſe who ſhall attempt to free him from his impriſonment, or ſhew the ſlighteſt attachment to his perſon or to his antient authority.

Executive magiſtracy ought to be conſtituted in ſuch a manner, that thoſe who compoſe it ſhould be diſpoſed to love and to venerate thoſe whom they are bound to obey. A purpoſed neglect, or, what is worſe, a literal but perverſe and malignant obedience, muſt be the ruin of the wiſeſt counſels. In vain will the law attempt to anticipate or to follow ſuch ſtudied neglects and fraudulent attentions. To make men act zealouſly is not in the competence of law.

Kings, even ſuch as are truly kings, may and ought to bear the freedom of ſubjects that are obnoxious to them. They may too, without derogating from themſelves, bear even the authority of ſuch perſons if it promotes their ſervice. Louis the XIIIth mortally hated the cardinal de Richlieu; but his ſupport of that miniſter againſt his rivals was the ſource of all the glory of his reign, and the ſolid foundation of his throne itſelf. Louis the XIVth, when come to the throne, did not love the cardinal Mazarin; but for his intereſts he preſerved him in power. When old, he deteſted Louvois; but for years, whilſt he faithfully ſerved his greatneſs, he endured his perſon. When George the IId took Mr. Pitt, who certainly was not agreeable to him, into his councils, he did nothing which could humble a wiſe ſovereign. But theſe miniſters, who were choſen by affairs, not by affections, acted in the name of, and in truſt for, kings; and not as their avowed, conſtitutional, and oſtenſible maſters. I think it impoſſible that any king, when he has recovered his firſt terrors, can cordially infuſe vivacity and vigour into meaſures which he knows to be dictated by thoſe who he muſt be perſuaded are in the higheſt degree ill affected to his perſon. Will any miniſters, who ſerve ſuch a king (or whatever he may be called) with but a decent appearance of reſpect, cordially obey the orders of thoſe whom but the other day in his name they had committed to the Baſtile? will they obey the orders of thoſe whom, whilſt they were exerciſing deſpotic juſtice upon them, they conceived they were treating with lenity; and for whom, in a priſon, they thought they had provided an aſylum? If you expect ſuch obedience, amongſt your other innovations and regenerations, you ought to make a revolution in nature, and provide a new conſtitution for the human mind. Otherwiſe, your ſupreme government cannot harmonize with its executory

cutory ſyſtem. There are caſes in which we cannot take up with names and abſtractions. You may call half a dozen leading individuals, whom we have reaſon to fear and hate, the nation. It makes no other difference, than to make us fear and hate them the more. If it had been thought juſtifiable and expedient to make ſuch a revolution by ſuch means, and through ſuch perſons, as you have made yours, it would have been more wiſe to have completed the buſineſs of the fifth and ſixth of October. The new executive officer would then owe his ſituation to thoſe who are his creators as well as his maſters; and he might be bound in intereſt, in the ſociety of crime, and (if in crimes there could be virtues) in gratitude to ſerve thoſe who had promoted him to a place of great lucre and great ſenſual indulgence; and of ſomething more: for more he muſt have received from thoſe who certainly would not have limited an aggrandized creature, as they have done a ſubmitting antagoniſt.

A king circumſtanced as the preſent, if he is totally ſtupified by his misfortunes, ſo as to think it not the neceſſity, but the premium and privilege of life, to eat and ſleep, without any regard to glory, never can be fit for the office. If he feels as men commonly feel, he muſt be ſenſible, that an office ſo circumſtanced is one in which he can obtain no fame or reputation. He has no generous intereſt that can excite him to action. At beſt, his conduct will be paſſive and defenſive. To inferior people ſuch an office might be matter of honour. But to be raiſed to it, and to deſcend to it, are different things, and ſuggeſt different ſentiments. Does he *really* name the miniſters? They will have a ſympathy with him. Are they forced upon him? The whole buſineſs between them and the nominal king will be mutual counteraction. In all other countries, the office of miniſters of ſtate is of the higheſt dignity. In France it is full of

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peril and incapable of glory. Rivals however they will have in their nothingneſs, whilſt ſhallow ambition exiſts in the world, or the deſire of a miſerable ſalary is an incentive to ſhort-ſighted avarice. Thoſe competitors of the miniſters are enabled by your conſtitution to attack them in their vital parts, whilſt they have not the means of repelling their charges in any other than the degrading character of culprits. The miniſters of ſtate in France are the only perſons in that country who are incapable of a ſhare in the national councils. What miniſters! What councils! What a nation! —But they are reſponſible. It is a poor ſervice that is to be had from reſponſibility. The elevation of mind, to be derived from fear, will never make a nation glorious. Reſponſibility prevents crimes. It makes all attempts againſt the laws dangerous. But for a principle of active and zealous ſervice, none but idiots could think of it. Is the conduct of a war to be truſted to a man who may abhor its principle; who, in every ſtep he may take to render it ſucceſsful, confirms the power of thoſe by whom he is oppreſſed? Will foreign ſtates ſeriouſly treat with him who has no prerogative of peace or war; no, not ſo much as in a ſingle vote by himſelf or his miniſters, or by any one whom he can poſſibly influence. A ſtate of contempt is not a ſtate for a prince: better get rid of him at once.

I know it will be ſaid, that theſe humours in the court and executive government will continue only through this generation; and that the king has been brought to declare the dauphin ſhall be educated in a conformity to his ſituation. If he is made to conform to his ſituation, he will have no education at all. His training muſt be worſe even than that of an arbitrary monarch. If he reads,—whether he reads or not, ſome good or evil genius will tell him his anceſtors were kings. Thenceforward his object muſt be to aſſert himſelf,

and to avenge his parents. This you will ſay is not his duty. That may be; but it is nature; and whilſt you pique nature againſt you, you do unwiſely to truſt to duty. In this futile ſcheme of polity, the ſtate nurſes in its boſom, for the preſent, a ſource of weakneſs, perplexity, counteraction, inefficiency, and decay; and it prepares the means of its final ruin. In ſhort, I ſee nothing in the executive force (I cannot call it authority) that has even an appearance of vigour, or that has the ſmalleſt degree of juſt correſpondence or ſymmetry, or amicable relation, with the ſupreme power, either as it now exiſts, or as it is planned for the future government.

You have ſettled, by an œconomy as perverted as the policy, two * eſtabliſhments of government; one real, one fictitious. Both maintained at a vaſt expence; but the fictitious at, I think, the greateſt. Such a machine as the latter is not worth the greaſe of its wheels. The expence is exorbitant; and neither the ſhew nor the uſe deſerve the tenth part of the charge. Oh! but I don't do juſtice to the talents of the legiſlators. I don't allow, as I ought to do, for neceſſity. Their ſcheme of executive force was not their choice. This pageant muſt be kept. The people would not conſent to part with it. Right; I underſtand you. You do, in ſpite of your grand theories, to which you would have heaven and earth to bend, you do know how to conform yourſelves to the nature and circumſtances of things. But when you were obliged to conform thus far to circumſtances, you ought to have carried your ſubmiſſion farther, and to have made what you were obliged to take, a proper inſtrument, and uſeful to its end. That was in your power. For inſtance, among many others, it was in your power to leave

* In reality three, to reckon the provincial republican eſtabliſhments.

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to your king the right of peace and war. What! to leave to the executive magiſtrate the moſt dangerous of all prerogatives? I know none more dangerous; nor any one more neceſſary to be ſo truſted. I do not ſay that this prerogative ought to be truſted to your king, unleſs he enjoyed other auxiliary truſts along with it, which he does not now hold. But, if he did poſſeſs them, hazardous as they are undoubtedly, advantages would ariſe from ſuch a conſtitution, more than compenſating the riſque. There is no other way of keeping the ſeveral potentates of Europe from intriguing diſtinctly and perſonally with the members of your aſſembly, from intermeddling in all your concerns, and fomenting, in the heart of your country, the moſt pernicious of all factions; factions in the intereſt and under the direction of foreign powers. From that worſt of evils, thank God, we are ſtill free. Your ſkill, if you had any, would be well employed to find out indirect correctives and controls upon this perilous truſt. If you did not like thoſe which in England we have choſen, your leaders might have exerted their abilities in contriving better. If it were neceſſary to exemplify the conſequences of ſuch an executive government as yours, in the management of great affairs, I ſhould refer you to the late reports of M. de Montmorin to the national aſſembly, and all the other proceedings relative to the differences between Great Britain and Spain. It would be treating your underſtanding with diſreſpect to point them out to you.

I hear that the perſons who are called miniſters have ſignified an intention of reſigning their places. I am rather aſtoniſhed that they have not reſigned long ſince. For the univerſe I would not have ſtood in the ſituation in which they have been for this laſt twelvemonth. They wiſhed well, I take it for granted, to the revolution. Let this fact

be as it may, they could not, placed as they were upon an eminence, though an eminence of humiliation, but be the firſt to ſee collectively, and to feel each in his own department, the evils which have been produced by that revolution. In every ſtep which they took, or forbore to take, they muſt have felt the degraded ſituation of their country, and their utter incapacity of ſerving it. They are in a ſpecies of ſubordinate ſervitude, in which no men before them were ever ſeen. Without confidence from their ſovereign, on whom they were forced, or from the aſſembly who forced them upon him, all the noble functions of their office are executed by committees of the aſſembly, without any regard whatſoever to their perſonal, or their official authority. They are to execute, without power; they are to be reſponſible, without diſcretion; they are to deliberate, without choice. In their puzzled ſituation, under two ſovereigns, over neither of whom they have any influence, they muſt act in ſuch a manner as (in effect, whatever they may intend) ſometimes to betray the one, ſometimes the other, and always to betray themſelves. Such has been their ſituation; ſuch muſt be the ſituation of thoſe who ſucceed them. I have much reſpect, and many good wiſhes, for Mr. Necker. I am obliged to him for attentions. I thought when his enemies had driven him from Verſailles, that his exile was a ſubject of moſt ſerious congratulation—*ſed multæ urbes et publica vota vicerunt.* He is now ſitting on the ruins of the finances, and of the monarchy of France.

A great deal more might be obſerved on the ſtrange conſtitution of the executory part of the new government; but fatigue muſt give bounds to the diſcuſſion of ſubjects, which in themſelves have hardly any limits.

As little genius and talent am I able to perceive in the plan of judicature formed by the national aſſembly. According

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to their invariable courſe, the framers of your conſtitution have begun with the utter abolition of the parliaments. Theſe venerable bodies, like the reſt of the old government, ſtood in need of reform, even though there ſhould be no change made in the monarchy. They required ſeveral more alterations to adapt them to the ſyſtem of a free conſtitution. But they had particulars in their conſtitution, and thoſe not a few, which deſerved approbation from the wiſe. They poſſeſſed one fundamental excellence; they were independent. The moſt doubtful circumſtance attendant on their office, that of its being vendible, contributed however to this independency of character. They held for life. Indeed they may be ſaid to have held by inheritance. Appointed by the monarch, they were conſidered as nearly out of his power. The moſt determined exertions of that authority againſt them only ſhewed their radical independence. They compoſed permanent bodies politic, conſtituted to reſiſt arbitrary innovation; and from that corporate conſtitution, and from moſt of their forms, they were well calculated to afford both certainty and ſtability to the laws. They had been a ſafe aſylum to ſecure theſe laws in all the revolutions of humour and opinion. They had ſaved that ſacred depoſit of the country during the reigns of arbitrary princes, and the ſtruggles of arbitrary factions. They kept alive the memory and record of the conſtitution. They were the great ſecurity to private property; which might be ſaid (when perſonal liberty had no exiſtence) to be, in fact, as well guarded in France as in any other country. Whatever is ſupreme in a ſtate, ought to have, as much as poſſible, its judicial authority ſo conſtituted as not only not to depend upon it, but in ſome ſort to balance it. It ought to give a ſecurity to its juſtice againſt its power. It ought to make its judicature, as it were, ſomething exterior to the ſtate.

Theſe

Theſe parliaments had furniſhed, not the beſt certainly, but ſome conſiderable corrective to the exceſſes and vices of the monarchy. Such an independent judicature was ten times more neceſſary when a democracy became the abſolute power of the country. In that conſtitution, elective, temporary, local judges, ſuch as you have contrived, exerciſing their dependent functions in a narrow ſociety, muſt be the worſt of all tribunals. In them it will be vain to look for any appearance of juſtice towards ſtrangers, towards the obnoxious rich, towards the minority of routed parties, towards all thoſe who in the election have ſupported unſucceſsful candidates. It will be impoſſible to keep the new tribunals clear of the worſt ſpirit of faction. All contrivances by ballot, we know experimentally, to be vain and childiſh to prevent a diſcovery of inclinations. Where they may the beſt anſwer the purpoſes of concealment, they anſwer to produce ſuſpicion, and this is a ſtill more miſchievous cauſe of partiality.

If the parliaments had been preſerved, inſtead of being diſſolved at ſo ruinous a change to the nation, they might have ſerved in this new commonwealth, perhaps not preciſely the ſame (I do not mean an exact parallel) but near the ſame purpoſes as the court and ſenate of Areopagus did in Athens; that is, as one of the balances and correctives to the evils of a light and unjuſt democracy. Every one knows, that this tribunal was the great ſtay of that ſtate; every one knows with what care it was upheld, and with what a religious awe it was conſecrated. The parliaments were not wholly free from faction, I admit; but this evil was exterior and accidental, and not ſo much the vice of their conſtitution itſelf, as it muſt be in your new contrivance of ſexennial elective judicatories. Several Engliſh commend the abolition of the old tribunals, as ſuppoſing that they determined

every

every thing by bribery and corruption. But they have ſtood the teſt of monarchic and republican ſcrutiny. The court was well diſpoſed to prove corruption on thoſe bodies when they were diſſolved in 1771.—Thoſe who have again diſſolved them would have done the ſame if they could—but both inquiſitions having failed, I conclude, that groſs pecuniary corruption muſt have been rather rare amongſt them.

It would have been prudent, along with the parliaments, to preſerve their antient power of regiſtering, and of remonſtrating at leaſt, upon all the decrees of the national aſſembly as they did upon thoſe which paſſed in the time of the monarchy. It would be a means of ſquaring the occaſional decrees of a democracy to ſome principles of general juriſprudence. The vice of the antient democracies, and one cauſe of their ruin, was, that they ruled, as you do, by occaſional decrees, *pſephiſmata*. This practice ſoon broke in upon the tenour and conſiſtency of the laws; it abated the reſpect of the people towards them; and totally deſtroyed them in the end.

Your veſting the power of remonſtrance, which, in the time of the monarchy, exiſted in the parliament of Paris, in your principal executive officer, whom, in ſpite of common ſenſe, you perſevere in calling king, is the height of abſurdity. You ought never to ſuffer remonſtrance from him who is to execute. This is to underſtand neither council nor execution; neither authority nor obedience. The perſon whom you call king, ought not to have this power, or he ought to have more.

Your preſent arrangement is ſtrictly judicial. Inſtead of imitating your monarchy, and ſeating your judges on a bench of independence, your object is to reduce them to the moſt blind obedience. As you have changed all things, you

have invented new principles of order. You firſt appoint judges, who, I ſuppoſe, are to determine according to law, and then you let them know, that, at ſome time or other, you intend to give them ſome law by which they are to determine. Any ſtudies which they have made (if any they have made) are to be uſeleſs to them. But to ſupply theſe ſtudies, they are to be ſworn to obey all the rules, orders, and inſtructions, which from time to time they are to receive from the national aſſembly. Theſe if they ſubmit to, they leave no ground of law to the ſubject. They become complete, and moſt dangerous inſtruments in the hands of the governing power, which, in the midſt of a cauſe, or on the proſpect of it, may wholly change the rule of deciſion. If theſe orders of the national aſſembly come to be contrary to the will of the people who locally chooſe thoſe judges, ſuch confuſion muſt happen as is terrible to think of. For the judges owe their place to the local authority; and the commands they are ſworn to obey come from thoſe who have no ſhare in their appointment. In the mean time they have the example of the court of *Chatelet* to encourage and guide them in the exerciſe of their functions. That court is to try criminals ſent to it by the national aſſembly, or brought before it by other courſes of delation. They ſit under a guard, to ſave their own lives. They know not by what law they judge, nor under what authority they act, nor by what tenure they hold. It is thought that they are ſometimes obliged to condemn at peril of their lives. This is not perhaps certain, nor can it be aſcertained; but when they acquit, we know they have ſeen the perſons whom they diſcharge, with perfect impunity to the actors, hanged at the door of their court.

The aſſembly indeed promiſes that they will form a body of law, which ſhall be ſhort, ſimple, clear, and ſo forth.

That

That is, by their ſhort laws, they will leave much to the diſcretion of the judge; whilſt they have exploded the authority of all the learning which could make judicial diſcretion, (a thing perilous at beſt) deſerving the appellation of a *ſound* diſcretion.

It is curious to obſerve, that the adminiſtrative bodies are carefully exempted from the juriſdiction of theſe new tribunals. That is, thoſe perſons are exempted from the power of the laws, who ought to be the moſt entirely ſubmitted to them. Thoſe who execute public pecuniary truſts, ought of all men to be the moſt ſtrictly held to their duty. One would have thought, that it muſt have been among your earlieſt cares, if you did not mean that thoſe adminiſtrative bodies ſhould be real ſovereign independent ſtates, to form an awful tribunal, like your late parliaments, or like our king's-bench, where all corporate officers might obtain protection in the legal exerciſe of their functions, and would find coercion if they treſpaſſed againſt their legal duty. But the cauſe of the exemption is plain. Theſe adminiſtrative bodies are the great inſtruments of the preſent leaders in their progreſs through democracy to oligarchy. They muſt therefore be put above the law. It will be ſaid, that the legal tribunals which you have made are unfit to coerce them. They are undoubtedly. They are unfit for any rational purpoſe. It will be ſaid too, that the adminiſtrative bodies will be accountable to the general aſſembly. This I fear is talking, without much conſideration, of the nature of that aſſembly or of theſe corporations. However, to be ſubject to the pleaſure of that aſſembly, is not to be ſubject to law, either for protection or for conſtraint.

This eſtabliſhment of judges as yet wants ſomething to its completion. It is to be crowned by a new tribunal. This is to be a grand ſtate judicature; and it is to judge of crimes

committed againſt the nation, that is, againſt the power of the aſſembly. It ſeems as if they had ſomething in their view of the nature of the high court of juſtice erected in England during the time of the great uſurpation. As they have not yet finiſhed this part of the ſcheme, it is impoſſible to form a direct judgment upon it. However, if great care is not taken to form it in a ſpirit very different from that which has guided them in their proceedings relative to ſtate offences, this tribunal, ſubſervient to their inquiſition, *the committee of reſearch*, will extinguiſh the laſt ſparks of liberty in France, and ſettle the moſt dreadful and arbitrary tyranny ever known in any nation. If they wiſh to give to this tribunal any appearance of liberty and juſtice, they muſt not evoke from, or ſend to it, the cauſes relative to their own members, at their pleaſure. They muſt alſo remove the ſeat of that tribunal out of the republic of Paris *.

Has more wiſdom been diſplayed in the conſtitution of your army than what is diſcoverable in your plan of judicature? The able arrangement of this part is the more difficult, and requires the greater ſkill and attention, not only as a great concern in itſelf, but as it is the third cementing principle in the new body of republics, which you call the French nation. Truly it is not eaſy to divine what that army may become at laſt. You have voted a very large one, and on good appointments, at leaſt fully equal to your apparent means of payment. But what is the principle of its diſcipline? or whom is it to obey? You have got the wolf by the ears, and I wiſh you joy of the happy poſition in which you have choſen to place yourſelves, and in which you are well circumſtanced for a free deliberation, relatively to that army, or to any thing elſe.

* For further elucidations upon the ſubject of all theſe judicatures, and of the committee of reſearch, ſee M. de Calonne's work.

The

The miniſter and ſecretary of ſtate for the war department, is M. de la Tour du Pin. This gentleman, like his colleagues in adminiſtration, is a moſt zealous aſſertor of the revolution, and a ſanguine admirer of the new conſtitution, which originated in that event. His ſtatement of facts, relative to the military of France, is important, not only from his official and perſonal authority, but becauſe it diſplays very clearly the actual condition of the army in France, and becauſe it throws light on the principles upon which the aſſembly proceeds in the adminiſtration of this critical object. It may enable us to form ſome judgment how far it may be expedient in this country to imitate the martial policy of France.

M. de la Tour du Pin, on the fourth of laſt June, comes to give an account of the ſtate of his department, as it exiſts under the auſpices of the national aſſembly. No man knows it ſo well; no man can expreſs it better. Addreſſing himſelf to the national aſſembly, he ſays, " His majeſty has *this day* " ſent me to apprize you of the multiplied diſorders of which " *every day* he receives the moſt diſtreſſing intelligence. " The army (le corps militaire) threatens to fall into the " moſt turbulent anarchy. Entire regiments have dared to " violate at once the reſpect due to the laws, to the king, to " the order eſtabliſhed by your decrees, and to the oaths " which they have taken with the moſt awful ſolemnity. " Compelled by my duty to give you information of theſe " exceſſes, my heart bleeds when I conſider who they are " that have committed them. Thoſe, againſt whom it is " not in my power to withhold the moſt grievous com- " plaints, are a part of that very ſoldiery which to this day " have been ſo full of honour and loyalty, and with " whom, for fifty years, I have lived the comrade and " the friend.

" What incomprehenſible ſpirit of delirium and deluſion " has all at once led them aſtray? Whilſt you are indefati- " gable in eſtabliſhing uniformity in the empire, and mould- " ing the whole into one coherent and conſiſtent body; whilſt " the French are taught by you, at once the reſpect which " the laws owe to the rights of man, and that which the ci- " tizens owe to the laws, the adminiſtration of the army " preſents nothing but diſturbance and confuſion. I ſee in " more than one corps the bonds of diſcipline relaxed or " broken; the moſt unheard of pretenſions avowed directly " and without any diſguiſe; the ordinances without force; " the chiefs without authority; the military cheſt and the " colours carried off; the authority of the king himſelf " [*riſum teneatis*] proudly defied; the officers deſpiſed, de- " graded, threatened, driven away, and ſome of them pri- " ſoners in the midſt of their corps, dragging on a precari- " ous life in the boſom of diſguſt and humiliation. To fill " up the meaſure of all theſe horrors, the commandants of " places have had their throats cut, under the eyes, and almoſt " in the arms of their own ſoldiers.

" Theſe evils are great; but they are not the worſt conſe- " quences which may be produced by ſuch military inſur- " rections. Sooner or later they may menace the nation it- " ſelf. *The nature of things requires*, that the army ſhould " never act but as *an inſtrument*. The moment that, erect- " ing itſelf into a deliberative body, it ſhall act according to " its own reſolutions, the *government, be it what it may,* " *will immediately degenerate into a military democracy*; a " ſpecies of political monſter, which has always ended by " devouring thoſe who have produced it.

" After all this, who muſt not be alarmed at the irregular " conſultations, and turbulent committees, formed in ſome " regiments by the common ſoldiers and non-commiſſioned " officers,

" officers, without the knowledge, or even in contempt of " the authority of their ſuperiors; although the preſence and " concurrence of thoſe ſuperiors could give no authority to " ſuch monſtrous democratic aſſemblies [comices.]"

It is not neceſſary to add much to this finiſhed picture: finiſhed as far as its canvas admits; but, as I apprehend, not taking in the whole of the nature and complexity of the diſorders of this military democracy, which, the miniſter at war truly and wiſely obſerves, wherever it exiſts, muſt be the true conſtitution of the ſtate, by whatever formal appellation it may paſs. For, though he informs the aſſembly, that the more conſiderable part of the army have not caſt off their obedience, but are ſtill attached to their duty, yet thoſe travellers who have ſeen the corps whoſe conduct is the beſt, rather obſerve in them the abſence of mutiny than the exiſtence of diſcipline.

I cannot help pauſing here for a moment, to reflect upon the expreſſions of ſurpriſe which this miniſter has let fall, relative to the exceſſes he relates. To him the departure of the troops from their antient principles of loyalty and honour ſeems quite inconceivable. Surely thoſe to whom he addreſſes himſelf know the cauſes of it but too well. They know the doctrines which they have preached, the decrees which they have paſſed, the practices which they have countenanced. The ſoldiers remember the 6th of October. They recollect the French guards. They have not forgot the taking of the king's caſtles in Paris, and at Marſeilles. That the governors in both places, were murdered with impunity, is a fact that has not paſſed out of their minds. They do not abandon the principles laid down ſo oſtentatiouſly and laborioufly of the equality of men. They cannot ſhut their eyes to the degradation of the whole nobleſſe of France; and the

ſuppreſſion

ſuppreſſion of the very idea of a gentleman. The total abolition of titles and diſtinctions is not loſt upon them. But Mr. du Pin is aſtoniſhed at their diſloyalty, when the doctors of the aſſembly have taught them at the ſame time the reſpect due to laws. It is eaſy to judge which of the two ſorts of leſſons men with arms in their hands are likely to learn. As to the authority of the king, we may collect from the miniſter himſelf (if any argument on that head were not quite ſuperfluous) that it is not of more conſideration with theſe troops, than it is with every body elſe. "The king," ſays he, "has over and over again repeated his orders to put "a ſtop to theſe exceſſes: but, in ſo terrible a criſis *your* [the "aſſembly's] concurrence is become indiſpenſably neceſſary "to prevent the evils which menace the ſtate. *You* unite "to the force of the legiſlative power, *that of opinion* ſtill "more important." To be ſure the army can have no opinion of the power or authority of the king. Perhaps the ſoldier has by this time learned, that the aſſembly itſelf does not enjoy a much greater degree of liberty than that royal figure.

It is now to be ſeen what has been propoſed in this exigency, one of the greateſt that can happen in a ſtate. The miniſter requeſts the aſſembly to array itſelf in all its terrors, and to call forth all its majeſty. He deſires that the grave and ſevere principles announced by them may give vigour to the king's proclamation. After this we ſhould have looked for courts civil and martial; breaking of ſome corps, decimating others, and all the terrible means which neceſſity has employed in ſuch caſes to arreſt the progreſs of the moſt terrible of all evils; particularly, one might expect, that a ſerious inquiry would be made into the murder of commandants in the view of their ſoldiers. Not one word of all this, or of any

any thing like it. After they had been told that the ſoldiery trampled upon the decrees of the aſſembly promulgated by the king, the aſſembly paſs new decrees; and they authoriſe the king to make new proclamations. After the ſecretary at war had ſtated that the regiments had paid no regard to oaths *prêtés avec la plus impoſante ſolemnité*—they propoſe—what? More oaths. They renew decrees and proclamations as they experience their inſufficiency, and they multiply oaths in proportion as they weaken, in the minds of men, the ſanctions of religion. I hope that handy abridgments of the excellent ſermons of Voltaire, d'Alembert, Diderot, and Helvetius, on the Immortality of the Soul, on a particular ſuperintending Providence, and on a Future State of Rewards and Puniſhments, are ſent down to the ſoldiers along with their civic oaths. Of this I have no doubt; as I underſtand, that a certain deſcription of reading makes no inconſiderable part of their military exerciſes, and that they are full as well ſupplied with the ammunition of pamphlets as of cartridges.

To prevent the miſchiefs ariſing from conſpiracies, irregular conſultations, ſeditious committees, and monſtrous democratic aſſemblies [‘comitia, comices’] of the ſoldiers, and all the diſorders ariſing from idleneſs, luxury, diſſipation, and inſubordination, I believe the moſt aſtoniſhing means have been uſed, that ever occurred to men, even in all the inventions of this prolific age. It is no leſs than this:—The king has promulgated in circular letters to all the regiments his direct authority and encouragement, that the ſeveral corps ſhould join themſelves with the clubs and confederations in the ſeveral municipalities, and mix with them in their feaſts and civic entertainments! This jolly diſcipline, it ſeems, is to ſoften the ferocity of their minds; to reconcile them to their bottle companions of other deſcriptions; and to merge

particular

particular conſpiracies in more general aſſociations *. That this remedy would be pleaſing to the ſoldiers, as they are deſcribed by Mr. de la Tour du Pin, I can readily believe; and that, however mutinous otherwiſe, they will dutifully ſubmit themſelves to *theſe* royal proclamations. But I ſhould queſtion whether all this civic ſwearing, clubbing, and feaſting, would diſpoſe them more than at preſent they are diſpoſed, to an obedience to their officers; or teach them better to ſubmit to the auſtere rules of military diſcipline. It will make them admirable citizens after the French mode, but not quite ſo good ſoldiers after any mode. A doubt might well ariſe, whether the converſations at theſe good tables would fit them a great deal the better for the character of *mere inſtruments*, which this veteran officer and ſtateſman juſtly obſerves, the nature of things always requires an army to be.

Concerning the likelihood of this improvement in diſcipline, by the free converſation of the ſoldiers with the municipal feſtive ſocieties, which is thus officially encouraged by royal authority and ſanction, we may judge by the ſtate of the municipalities themſelves, furniſhed to us by the war miniſter in this very ſpeech. He conceives good hopes of the ſucceſs of his endeavours towards reſtoring order *for the preſent* from the good diſpoſition of certain regiments; but he finds ſomething cloudy with regard to the future. As to preventing the return of confuſion "for this, the admini-"ſtration (ſays he) cannot be anſwerable to you, as long as

* Comme ſa majeſté y a reconnu, non une ſyſtême d'aſſociations particulières, mais une réunion de volontés de tous les François pour la liberté et la proſperité communes, ainſi pour le maintien de l'ordre publique; il a penſé qu'il convenoit que chaque regiment prit part a ces fêtes civiques pour multiplier les rapports, et reſerrer les liens d'union entre les citoyens et les troupes.—Leſt I ſhould not be credited, I inſert the words, authoriſing the troops to feaſt with the popular confederacies.

"they

" they ſee the municipalities arrogate to themſelves an au-
" thority over the troops, which your inſtitutions have re-
" ſerved wholly to the monarch. You have fixed the limits
" of the military authority and the municipal authority.
" You have bounded the action, which you have permitted
" to the latter over the former, to the right of requiſition;
" but never did the letter or the ſpirit of your decrees
" authoriſe the commons in theſe municipalities to break
" the officers, to try them, to give orders to the ſoldiers, to
" drive them from the poſts committed to their guard, to
" ſtop them in their marches ordered by the king, or, in a
" word, to enſlave the troops to the caprice of each of the
" cities or even market towns through which they are to
" paſs."

Such is the character and diſpoſition of the municipal ſociety which is to reclaim the ſoldiery, to bring them back to the true principles of military ſubordination, and to render them machines in the hands of the ſupreme power of the country! Such are the diſtempers of the French troops! Such is their cure! As the army is, ſo is the navy. The municipalities ſuperſede the orders of the aſſembly, and the ſeamen in their turn ſuperſede the orders of the municipalities. From my heart I pity the condition of a reſpectable ſervant of the public, like this war miniſter, obliged in his old age to pledge the aſſembly in their civic cups, and to enter with an hoary head into all the fantaſtick vagaries of theſe juvenile politicians. Such ſchemes are not like propoſitions coming from a man of fifty years wear and tear amongſt mankind. They ſeem rather ſuch as ought to be expected from thoſe grand compounders in politics, who ſhorten the road to their degrees in the ſtate; and have a certain inward fanatical aſſurance and illumination upon all ſubjects; upon the credit of which one of their doctors has

thought fit, with great applauſe, and greater ſucceſs, to caution the aſſembly not to attend to old men, or to any perſons who valued themſelves upon their experience. I ſuppoſe all the miniſters of ſtate muſt qualify, and take this teſt; wholly abjuring the errors and hereſies of experience and obſervation. Every man has his own reliſh. But I think, if I could not attain to the wiſdom, I would at leaſt preſerve ſomething of the ſtiff and peremptory dignity of age. Theſe gentlemen deal in regeneration; but at any price I ſhould hardly yield my rigid fibres to be regenerated by them; nor begin, in my grand climacteric, to ſquall in their new accents, or to ſtammer, in my ſecond cradle, the elemental ſounds of their barbarous metaphyſics *. *Si iſti mihi largiantur ut repueriſcam, et in eorum cunis vagiam, valde recuſem!*

The imbecility of any part of the puerile and pedantic ſyſtem, which they call a conſtitution, cannot be laid open without diſcovering the utter inſufficiency and miſchief of every other part with which it comes in contact, or that bears any the remoteſt relation to it. You cannot propoſe a remedy for the incompetence of the crown, without diſplaying the debility of the aſſembly. You cannot deliberate on the confuſion of the army of the ſtate, without diſcloſing the worſe diſorders of the armed municipalities. The military lays open the civil, and the civil betrays the military anarchy. I wiſh every body carefully to peruſe the eloquent ſpeech (ſuch it is) of Monſ. de la Tour du Pin. He attributes the ſalvation of the municipalities to the good behaviour of ſome of the troops. Theſe troops are to preſerve the well-diſpoſed part of thoſe municipalities, which is confeſſed to be the weakeſt, from the pillage of the worſt diſpoſed, which is

* This war-miniſter has ſince quitted the ſchool and reſigned his office.

the

the ſtrongeſt. But the municipalities affect a ſovereignty and will command thoſe troops which are neceſſary for their protection. Indeed they muſt command them or court them. The municipalities, by the neceſſity of their ſituation, and by the republican powers they have obtained, muſt, with relation to the military, be the maſters, or the ſervants, or the confederates, or each ſucceſſively; or they muſt make a jumble of all together, according to circumſtances. What government is there to coerce the army but the municipality, or the municipality but the army? To preſerve concord where authority is extinguiſhed, at the hazard of all conſequences, the aſſembly attempts to cure the diſtempers by the diſtempers themſelves; and they hope to preſerve themſelves from a purely military democracy, by giving it a debauched intereſt in the municipal.

If the ſoldiers once come to mix for any time in the municipal clubs, cabals, and confederacies, an elective attraction will draw them to the loweſt and moſt deſperate part. With them will be their habits, affections, and ſympathies. The military conſpiracies, which are to be remedied by civic confederacies; the rebellious municipalities, which are to be rendered obedient by furniſhing them with the means of ſeducing the very armies of the ſtate that are to keep them in order; all theſe chimeras of a monſtrous and portentous policy, muſt aggravate the confuſions from which they have ariſen. There muſt be blood. The want of common judgment manifeſted in the conſtruction of all their deſcriptions of forces, and in all their kinds of civil and judicial authorities, will make it flow. Diſorders may be quieted in one time and in one part. They will break out in others; becauſe the evil is radical and intrinſic. All theſe ſchemes of mixing mutinous ſoldiers with ſeditious citizens, muſt weaken ſtill more and more the military connexion of ſol-

diers with their officers, as well as add military and mutinous audacity to turbulent artificers and peaſants. To ſecure a real army, the officer ſhould be firſt and laſt in the eye of the ſoldier; firſt and laſt in his attention, obſervance, and eſteem. Officers it ſeems there are to be, whoſe chief qualification muſt be temper and patience. They are to manage their troops by electioneering arts. They muſt bear themſelves as candidates not as commanders. But as by ſuch means power may be occaſionally in their hands, the authority by which they are to be nominated becomes of high importance.

What you may do finally, does not appear; nor is it of much moment, whilſt the ſtrange and contradictory relation between your army and all the parts of your republic, as well as the puzzled relation of thoſe parts to each other and to the whole, remain as they are. You ſeem to have given the proviſional nomination of the officers, in the firſt inſtance, to the king, with a reſerve of approbation by the national aſſembly. Men who have an intereſt to purſue are extremely ſagacious in diſcovering the true ſeat of power. They muſt ſoon perceive that thoſe who can negative indefinitely, in reality appoint. The officers muſt therefore look to their intrigues in that aſſembly, as the ſole certain road to promotion. Still, however, by your new conſtitution they muſt begin their ſolicitation at court. This double negotiation for military rank ſeems to me a contrivance as well adapted, as if it were ſtudied for no other end, to promote faction in the aſſembly itſelf, relative to this vaſt military patronage; and then to poiſon the corps of officers with factions of a nature ſtill more dangerous to the ſafety of government, upon any bottom on which it can be placed, and deſtructive in the end to the efficiency of the army itſelf. Thoſe officers, who loſe the promotions intended for

them

them by the crown, muſt become of a faction oppoſite to that of the aſſembly which has rejected their claims, and muſt nouriſh diſcontents in the heart of the army againſt the ruling powers. Thoſe officers, on the other hand, who, by carrying their point through an intereſt in the aſſembly, feel themſelves to be at beſt only ſecond in the good-will of the crown, though firſt in that of the aſſembly, muſt ſlight an authority which would not advance, and could not retard their promotion. If to avoid theſe evils you will have no other rule for command or promotion than ſeniority, you will have an army of formality; at the ſame time it will become more independent, and more of a military republic. Not they but the king is the machine. A king is not to be depoſed by halves. If he is not every thing in the command of an army, he is nothing. What is the effect of a power placed nominally at the head of the army, who to that army is no object of gratitude, or of fear? Such a cypher is not fit for the adminiſtration of an object, of all things the moſt delicate, the ſupreme command of military men. They muſt be conſtrained (and their inclinations lead them to what their neceſſities require) by a real, vigorous, effective, decided, perſonal authority. The authority of the aſſembly itſelf ſuffers by paſſing through ſuch a debilitating channel as they have choſen. The army will not long look to an aſſembly acting through the organ of falſe ſhew, and palpable impoſition. They will not ſeriouſly yield obedience to a priſoner. They will either deſpiſe a pageant, or they will pity a captive king. This relation of your army to the crown will, if I am not greatly miſtaken, become a ſerious dilemma in your politics.

It is beſides to be conſidered, whether an aſſembly like yours, even ſuppoſing that it was in poſſeſſion of another ſort of organ through which its orders were to paſs, is fit for

promoting

promoting the obedience and diſcipline of an army. It is known, that armies have hitherto yielded a very precarious and uncertain obedience to any ſenate, or popular authority; and they will leaſt of all yield it to an aſſembly which is to have only a continuance of two years. The officers muſt totally loſe the characteriſtic diſpoſition of military men, if they ſee with perfect ſubmiſſion and due admiration, the dominion of pleaders; eſpecially when they find, that they have a new court to pay to an endleſs ſucceſſion of thoſe pleaders, whoſe military policy, and the genius of whoſe command (if they ſhould have any) muſt be as uncertain as their duration is tranſient. In the weakneſs of one kind of authority, and in the fluctuation of all, the officers of an army will remain for ſome time mutinous and full of faction, until ſome popular general, who underſtands the art of conciliating the ſoldiery, and who poſſeſſes the true ſpirit of command, ſhall draw the eyes of all men upon himſelf. Armies will obey him on his perſonal account. There is no other way of ſecuring military obedience in this ſtate of things. But the moment in which that event ſhall happen, the perſon who really commands the army is your maſter; the maſter (that is little) of your king, the maſter of your aſſembly, the maſter of your whole republic.

How came the aſſembly by their preſent power over the army? Chiefly, to be ſure, by debauching the ſoldiers from their officers. They have begun by a moſt terrible operation. They have touched the central point, about which the particles that compoſe armies are at repoſe. They have deſtroyed the principle of obedience in the great eſſential critical link between the officer and the ſoldier, juſt where the chain of military ſubordination commences, and on which the whole of that ſyſtem depends. The ſoldier is told, he is a citizen, and has the rights of man and citizen.

The right of a man, he is told, is to be his own governor, and to be ruled only by thoſe to whom he delegates that ſelf-government. It is very natural he ſhould think, that he ought moſt of all to have his choice where he is to yield the greateſt degree of obedience. He will therefore, in all probability, ſyſtematically do, what he does at preſent occaſionally; that is, he will exerciſe at leaſt a negative in the choice of his officers. At preſent the officers are known at beſt to be only permiſſive, and on their good behaviour. In fact, there have been many inſtances in which they have been caſhiered by their corps. Here is a ſecond negative on the choice of the king; a negative as effectual at leaſt as the other of the aſſembly. The ſoldiers know already that it has been a queſtion, not ill received in the national aſſembly, whether they ought not to have the direct choice of their officers, or ſome proportion of them? When ſuch matters are in deliberation, it is no extravagant ſuppoſition that they will incline to the opinion moſt favourable to their pretenſions. They will not bear to be deemed the army of an impriſoned king, whilſt another army in the ſame country, with whom too they are to feaſt and confederate, is to be conſidered as the free army of a free conſtitution. They will caſt their eyes on the other and more permanent army; I mean the municipal. That corps, they well know, does actually elect its own officers. They may not be able to diſcern the grounds of diſtinction on which they are not to elect a Marquis de la Fayette (or what is his new name) of their own? If this election of a commander in chief be a part of the rights of men, why not of theirs? They ſee elective juſtices of peace, elective judges, elective curates, elective biſhops, elective municipalities, and elective commanders of the Pariſian army.—Why ſhould they alone be excluded? Are the brave troops of France the only men in

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that nation who are not the fit judges of military merit, and of the qualifications neceſſary for a commander in chief? Are they paid by the ſtate, and do they therefore loſe the rights of men? They are a part of that nation themſelves, and contribute to that pay. And is not the king, is not the national aſſembly, and are not all who elect the national aſſembly, likewiſe paid? Inſtead of ſeeing all theſe forfeit their rights by their receiving a ſalary, they perceive that in all theſe caſes a ſalary is given for the exerciſe of thoſe rights. All your reſolutions, all your proceedings, all your debates, all the works of your doctors in religion and politics, have induſtriouſly been put into their hands; and you expect that they will apply to their own caſe juſt as much of your doctrines and examples as ſuits your pleaſure.

Every thing depends upon the army in ſuch a government as yours; for you have induſtriouſly deſtroyed all the opinions, and prejudices, and, as far as in you lay, all the inſtincts which ſupport government. Therefore the moment any difference ariſes between your national aſſembly and any part of the nation, you muſt have recourſe to force. Nothing elſe is left to you; or rather you have left nothing elſe to yourſelves. You ſee by the report of your war miniſter, that the diſtribution of the army is in a great meaſure made with a view of internal coercion *. You muſt rule by an army; and you have infuſed into that army by which you rule, as well as into the whole body of the nation, principles which after a time muſt diſable you in the uſe you reſolve to make of it. The king is to call out troops to act againſt his people, when the world has been told, and the aſſertion is ſtill ringing in our ears, that troops ought not to fire on citizens. The colonies aſſert to themſelves an inde-

* Courier François, 30 July, 1790. Aſſemblée Nationale, Numero 210.

pendent

pendent conſtitution and a free trade. They muſt be conſtrained by troops. In what chapter of your code of the rights of men are they able to read, that it is a part of the rights of men to have their commerce monopolized and reſtrained for the benefit of others. As the coloniſts riſe on you, the negroes riſe on them. Troops again—Maſſacre, torture, hanging! Theſe are your rights of men! Theſe are the fruits of metaphyſic declarations wantonly made, and ſhamefully retracted! It was but the other day that the farmers of land in one of your provinces refuſed to pay ſome ſorts of rents to the lord of the ſoil. In conſequence of this you decree, that the country people ſhall pay all rents and dues, except thoſe which as grievances you have aboliſhed; and if they refuſe, then you order the king to march troops againſt them. You lay down metaphyſic propoſitions which infer univerſal conſequences, and then you attempt to limit logic by deſpotiſm. The leaders of the preſent ſyſtem tell them of their rights, as men, to take fortreſſes, to murder guards, to ſeize on kings without the leaſt appearance of authority even from the aſſembly, whilſt, as the ſovereign legiſlative body, that aſſembly was ſitting in the name of the nation—and yet theſe leaders preſume to order out the troops, which have acted in theſe very diſorders, to coerce thoſe who ſhall judge on the principles, and follow the examples, which have been guarantied by their own approbation.

The leaders teach the people to abhor and reject all feodality as the barbariſm of tyranny, and they tell them afterwards how much of that barbarous tyranny they are to bear with patience. As they are prodigal of light with regard to grievances, ſo the people find them ſparing in the extreme with regard to redreſs. They know that not only certain quit-rents and perſonal duties, which you have permitted them

to redeem (but have furniſhed no money for the redemption) are as nothing to thoſe burthens for which you have made no proviſion at all. They know, that almoſt the whole ſyſtem of landed property in its origin is feudal; that it is the diſtribution of the poſſeſſions of the original proprietors, made by a barbarous conqueror to his barbarous inſtruments; and that the moſt grievous effects of the conqueſt are the land rents of every kind, as without queſtion they are.

The peaſants, in all probability, are the deſcendants of theſe antient proprietors, Romans or Gauls. But if they fail, in any degree, in the titles which they make on the principles of antiquaries and lawyers, they retreat into the citadel of the rights of men. There they find that men are equal; and the earth, the kind and equal mother of all, ought not to be monopolized to foſter the pride and luxury of any men, who by nature are no better than themſelves, and who, if they do not labour for their bread, are worſe. They find, that by the laws of nature the occupant and ſubduer of the ſoil is the true proprietor; that there is no preſcription againſt nature; and that the agreements (where any there are) which have been made with their landlords, during the time of ſlavery, are only the effect of dureſſe and force; and that when the people re-entered into the rights of men, thoſe agreements were made as void as every thing elſe which had been ſettled under the prevalence of the old feudal and ariſtocratic tyranny. They will tell you that they ſee no difference between an idler with a hat and a national cockade, and an idler in a cowl or in a rochet. If you ground the title to rents on ſucceſſion and preſcription, they tell you, from the ſpeech of Mr. *Camus*, publiſhed by the national aſſembly for their information, that things ill begun cannot avail themſelves of preſcription; that the title of

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theſe lords was vicious in its origin; and that force is at leaſt as bad as fraud. As to the title by ſucceſſion, they will tell you, that the ſucceſſion of thoſe who have cultivated the ſoil is the true pedigree of property, and not rotten parchments and ſilly ſubſtitutions; that the lords have enjoyed their uſurpation too long; and that if they allow to theſe lay monks any charitable penſion, they ought to be thankful to the bounty of the true proprietor, who is ſo generous towards a falſe claimant to his goods.

When the peaſants give you back that coin of ſophiſtic reaſon, on which you have ſet your image and ſuperſcription, you cry it down as baſe money, and tell them you will pay for the future with French guards, and dragoons, and huſſars. You hold up, to chaſtiſe them, the ſecond-hand authority of a king, who is only the inſtrument of deſtroying, without any power of protecting either the people or his own perſon. Through him it ſeems you will make yourſelves obeyed. They anſwer, You have taught us that there are no gentlemen; and which of your principles teach us to bow to kings whom we have not elected? We know, without your teaching, that lands were given for the ſupport of feudal dignities, feudal titles, and feudal offices. When you took down the cauſe as a grievance, why ſhould the more grievous effect remain? As there are now no hereditary honours, and no diſtinguiſhed families, why are we taxed to maintain what you tell us ought not to exiſt? You have ſent down our old ariſtocratic landlords in no other character, and with no other title, but that of exactors under your authority. Have you endeavoured to make theſe your rent-gatherers reſpectable to us? No. You have ſent them to us with their arms reverſed, their ſhields broken, their impreſſes defaced; and ſo diſplumed, degraded, and metamorphoſed, ſuch unfeathered two-legged things, that we no

longer know them. They are ſtrangers to us. They do not even go by the names of our antient lords. Phyſically they may be the ſame men; though we are not quite ſure of that, on your new philoſophic doctrines of perſonal identity. In all other reſpects they are totally changed. We do not ſee why we have not as good a right to refuſe them their rents, as you have to abrogate all their honours, titles, and diſtinctions. This we have never commiſſioned you to do; and it is one inſtance, among many indeed, of your aſſumption of undelegated power. We ſee the burghers of Paris, through their clubs, their mobs, and their national guards, directing you at their pleaſure, and giving that as law to you, which, under your authority, is tranſmitted as law to us. Through you, theſe burghers diſpoſe of the lives and fortunes of us all. Why ſhould not you attend as much to the deſires of the laborious huſbandman with regard to our rent, by which we are affected in the moſt ſerious manner, as you do to the demands of theſe inſolent burghers, relative to diſtinctions and titles of honour, by which neither they nor we are affected at all? But we find you pay more regard to their fancies than to our neceſſities. Is it among the rights of man to pay tribute to his equals? Before this meaſure of yours, we might have thought we were not perfectly equal. We might have entertained ſome old, habitual, unmeaning prepoſſeſſion in favour of thoſe landlords; but we cannot conceive with what other view than that of deſtroying all reſpect to them, you could have made the law that degrades them. You have forbidden us to treat them with any of the old formalities of reſpect, and now you ſend troops to ſabre and to bayonet us into a ſubmiſſion to fear and force, which you did not ſuffer us to yield to the mild authority of opinion.

The ground of ſome of theſe arguments is horrid and ridiculous

diculous to all rational ears; but to the politicians of metaphyſics who have opened ſchools for ſophiſtry, and made eſtabliſhments for anarchy, it is ſolid and concluſive. It is obvious, that on a mere conſideration of the right, the leaders in the aſſembly would not in the leaſt have ſcrupled to abrogate the rents along with the titles and family enſigns. It would be only to follow up the principle of their reaſonings, and to complete the analogy of their conduct. But they had newly poſſeſſed themſelves of a great body of landed property by confiſcation. They had this commodity at market; and the market would have been wholly deſtroyed, if they were to permit the huſbandmen to riot in the ſpeculations with which they ſo freely intoxicated themſelves. The only ſecurity which property enjoys in any one of its deſcriptions, is from the intereſts of their rapacity with regard to ſome other. They have left nothing but their own arbitrary pleaſure to determine what property is to be protected and what ſubverted.

Neither have they left any principle by which any of their municipalities can be bound to obedience; or even conſcientiouſly obliged not to ſeparate from the whole, to become independent, or to connect itſelf with ſome other ſtate. The people of Lyons, it ſeems, have refuſed lately to pay taxes. Why ſhould they not? What lawful authority is there left to exact them? The king impoſed ſome of them. The old ſtates, methodized by orders, ſettled the more antient. They may ſay to the aſſembly, Who are you, that are not our kings, nor the ſtates we have elected, nor ſit on the principles on which we have elected you? And who are we, that when we ſee the gabelles which you have ordered to be paid, wholly ſhaken off, when we ſee the act of diſobedience afterwards ratified by yourſelves, who are we, that we are not to judge what taxes we ought or ought not to pay, and

who

who are not to avail ourſelves of the ſame powers, the validity of which you have approved in others? To this the anſwer is, We will ſend troops. The laſt reaſon of kings, is always the firſt with your aſſembly. This military aid may ſerve for a time, whilſt the impreſſion of the increaſe of pay remains, and the vanity of being umpires in all diſputes is flattered. But this weapon will ſnap ſhort, unfaithful to the hand that employs it. The aſſembly keep a ſchool where, ſyſtematically, and with unremitting perſeverance, they teach principles, and form regulations deſtructive to all ſpirit of ſubordination, civil and military—and then they expect that they ſhall hold in obedience an anarchic people by an anarchic army.

The municipal army, which, according to their new policy, is to balance this national army, if conſidered in itſelf only, is of a conſtitution much more ſimple, and in every reſpect leſs exceptionable. It is a mere democratic body, unconnected with the crown or the kingdom; armed, and trained, and officered at the pleaſure of the diſtricts to which the corps ſeverally belong; and the perſonal ſervice of the individuals, who compoſe, or the fine in lieu of perſonal ſervice, are directed by the ſame authority *. Nothing is more uniform. If, however, conſidered in any relation to the crown, to the national aſſembly, to the public tribunals, or to the other army, or conſidered in a view to any coherence or connexion between its parts, it ſeems a monſter, and can hardly fail to terminate its perplexed movements in ſome great national calamity. It is a worſe preſervative of a

* I ſee by Mr. Necker's account, that the national guards of Paris have received, over and above the money levied within their own city, about 145,000*l.* ſterling out of the public treaſure. Whether this be an actual payment for the nine months of their exiſtence, or an eſtimate of their yearly charge, I do not clearly perceive. It is of no great importance, as certainly they may take whatever they pleaſe.

general conſtitution, than the ſyſtaſis of Crete, or the confederation of Poland, or any other ill-deviſed corrective which has yet been imagined, in the neceſſities produced by an ill-conſtructed ſyſtem of government.

Having concluded my few remarks on the conſtitution of the ſupreme power, the executive, the judicature, the military, and on the reciprocal relation of all theſe eſtabliſhments, I ſhall ſay ſomething of the ability ſhewed by your legiſlators with regard to the revenue.

In their proceedings relative to this object, if poſſible, ſtill fewer traces appear of political judgment or financial reſource. When the ſtates met, it ſeemed to be the great object to improve the ſyſtem of revenue, to enlarge its collection, to cleanſe it of oppreſſion and vexation, and to eſtabliſh it on the moſt ſolid footing. Great were the expectations entertained on that head throughout Europe. It was by this grand arrangement that France was to ſtand or fall; and this became, in my opinion, very properly, the teſt by which the ſkill and patriotiſm of thoſe who ruled in that aſſembly would be tried. The revenue of the ſtate is the ſtate. In effect all depends upon it, whether for ſupport or for reformation. The dignity of every occupation wholly depends upon the quantity and the kind of virtue that may be exerted in it. As all great qualities of the mind which operate in public, and are not merely ſuffering and paſſive, require force for their diſplay, I had almoſt ſaid for their unequivocal exiſtence, the revenue, which is the ſpring of all power, becomes in its adminiſtration the ſphere of every active virtue. Public virtue, being of a nature magnificent and ſplendid, inſtituted for great things, and converſant about great concerns, requires abundant ſcope and room, and cannot ſpread and grow under confinement, and in circumſtances ſtraitened, narrow, and ſordid. Through the revenue

nue alone the body politic can act in its true genius and character, and therefore it will diſplay juſt as much of its collective virtue, and as much of that virtue which may characteriſe thoſe who move it, and are, as it were, its life and guiding principle, as it is poſſeſſed of a juſt revenue. For from hence not only magnanimity, and liberality, and beneficence, and fortitude, and providence, and the tutelary protection of all good arts, derive their food, and the growth of their organs, but continence, and ſelf-denial, and labour, and vigilance, and frugality, and whatever elſe there is in which the mind ſhews itſelf above the appetite, are no where more in their proper element than in the proviſion and diſtribution of the public wealth. It is therefore not without reaſon that the ſcience of ſpeculative and practical finance, which muſt take to its aid ſo many auxiliary branches of knowledge, ſtands high in the eſtimation not only of the ordinary ſort, but of the wiſeſt and beſt men; and as this ſcience has grown with the progreſs of its object, the proſperity and improvement of nations has generally encreaſed with the encreaſe of their revenues; and they will both continue to grow and flouriſh, as long as the balance between what is left to ſtrengthen the efforts of individuals, and what is collected for the common efforts of the ſtate, bear to each other a due reciprocal proportion, and are kept in a cloſe correſpondence and communication. And perhaps it may be owing to the greatneſs of revenues, and to the urgency of ſtate neceſſities, that old abuſes in the conſtitution of finances are diſcovered, and their true nature and rational theory comes to be more perfectly underſtood; inſomuch, that a ſmaller revenue might have been more diſtreſſing in one period than a far greater is found to be in another; the proportionate wealth even remaining the ſame. In this ſtate of things, the French aſſembly found ſomething in their revenues to preſerve, to ſecure, and wiſely to adminiſter, as well

well as to abrogate and alter. Though their proud aſſumption might juſtify the ſevereſt teſts, yet in trying their abilities on their financial proceedings, I would only conſider what is the plain obvious duty of a common finance miniſter, and try them upon that, and not upon models of ideal perfection.

The objects of a financier are, then, to ſecure an ample revenue; to impoſe it with judgment and equality; to employ it œconomically; and when neceſſity obliges him to make uſe of credit, to ſecure its foundations in that inſtance, and for ever, by the clearneſs and candour of his proceedings, the exactneſs of his calculations, and the ſolidity of his funds. On theſe heads we may take a ſhort and diſtinct view of the merits and abilities of thoſe in the national aſſembly, who have taken to themſelves the management of this arduous concern. Far from any increaſe of revenue in their hands, I find, by a report of M. Vernier, from the committee of finances, of the ſecond of Auguſt laſt, that the amount of the national revenue, as compared with its produce before the revolution, was diminiſhed by the ſum of two hundred millions, or *eight millions ſterling* of the annual income, conſiderably more than one-third of the whole.

If this be the reſult of great ability, never ſurely was ability diſplayed in a more diſtinguiſhed manner, or with ſo powerful an effect. No common folly, no vulgar incapacity, no ordinary official negligence, even no official crime, no corruption, no peculation, hardly any direct hoſtility which we have ſeen in the modern world, could in ſo ſhort a time have made ſo complete an overthrow of the finances, and with them, of the ſtrength of a great kingdom.—*Cedò quî veſtram rempublicam tantam amiſiſtis tam cito?*

The ſophiſters and declaimers, as ſoon as the aſſembly met, began with decrying the antient conſtitution of the revenue

in many of its moſt eſſential branches, ſuch as the public monopoly of ſalt. They charged it, as truly as unwiſely, with being ill-contrived, oppreſſive, and partial. This repreſentation they were not ſatisfied to make uſe of in ſpeeches preliminary to ſome plan of reform; they declared it in a ſolemn reſolution or public ſentence, as it were judicially, paſſed upon it; and this they diſperſed throughout the nation. At the time they paſſed the decree, with the ſame gravity they ordered this ſame abſurd, oppreſſive, and partial tax to be paid, until they could find a revenue to replace it. The conſequence was inevitable. The provinces which had been always exempted from this ſalt monopoly, ſome of whom were charged with other contributions, perhaps equivalent, were totally diſinclined to bear any part of the burthen, which by an equal diſtribution was to redeem the others. As to the aſſembly, occupied as it was with the declaration and violation of the rights of men, and with their arrangements for general confuſion, it had neither leiſure nor capacity to contrive, nor authority to enforce any plan of any kind relative to the replacing the tax or equalizing it, or compenſating the provinces, or for conducting their minds to any ſcheme of accommodation with the other diſtricts which were to be relieved.

The people of the ſalt provinces, impatient under taxes damned by the authority which had directed their payment, very ſoon found their patience exhauſted. They thought themſelves as ſkilful in demoliſhing as the aſſembly could be. They relieved themſelves by throwing off the whole burthen. Animated by this example, each diſtrict, or part of a diſtrict, judging of its own grievance by its own feeling, and of its remedy by its own opinion, did as it pleaſed with other taxes.

We are next to ſee how they have conducted themſelves in

in contriving equal impoſitions, proportioned to the means of the citizens, and the leaſt likely to lean heavy on the active capital employed in the generation of that private wealth, from whence the public fortune muſt be derived. By ſuffering the ſeveral diſtricts, and ſeveral of the individuals in each diſtrict, to judge of what part of the old revenue they might withhold, inſtead of better principles of equality, a new inequality was introduced of the moſt oppreſſive kind. Payments were regulated by diſpoſitions. The parts of the kingdom which were the moſt ſubmiſſive, the moſt orderly, or the moſt affectionate to the commonwealth, bore the whole burthen of the ſtate. Nothing turns out to be ſo oppreſſive and unjuſt as a feeble government. To fill up all the deficiencies in the old impoſitions, and the new deficiencies of every kind which were to be expected, what remained to a ſtate without authority? The national aſſembly called for a voluntary benevolence; for a fourth part of the income of all the citizens, to be eſtimated on the honour of thoſe who were to pay. They obtained ſomething more than could be rationally calculated, but what was, far indeed, from anſwerable to their real neceſſities, and much leſs to their fond expectations. Rational people could have hoped for little from this their tax in the diſguiſe of a benevolence; a tax, weak, ineffective, and unequal; a tax by which luxury, avarice, and ſelfiſhneſs were ſcreened, and the load thrown upon productive capital, upon integrity, generoſity, and public ſpirit—a tax of regulation upon virtue. At length the maſk is thrown off, and they are now trying means (with little ſucceſs) of exacting their benevolence by force.

This benevolence, the ricketty offſpring of weakneſs, was to be ſupported by another reſource, the twin brother of the ſame prolific imbecility. The patriotic donations were to

make good the failure of the patriotic contribution. John Doe was to become ſecurity for Richard Roe. By this ſcheme they took things of much price from the giver, comparatively of ſmall value to the receiver; they ruined ſeveral trades; they pillaged the crown of its ornaments, the churches of their plate, and the people of their perſonal decorations. The invention of theſe juvenile pretenders to liberty, was in reality nothing more than a ſervile imitation of one of the pooreſt reſources of doting deſpotiſm. They took an old huge full-bottomed perriwig out of the wardrobe of the antiquated frippery of Louis XIV. to cover the premature baldneſs of the national aſſembly. They produced this old-faſhioned formal folly, though it had been ſo abundantly expoſed in the Memoirs of the Duke de St. Simon, if to reaſonable men it had wanted any arguments to diſplay its miſchief and inſufficiency. A device of the ſame kind was tried in my memory by Louis XV. but it anſwered at no time. However, the neceſſities of ruinous wars were ſome excuſe for deſperate projects. The deliberations of calamity are rarely wiſe. But here was a ſeaſon for diſpoſition and providence. It was in a time of profound peace, then enjoyed for five years, and promiſing a much longer continuance, that they had recourſe to this deſperate trifling. They were ſure to loſe more reputation by ſporting, in their ſerious ſituation, with theſe toys and playthings of finance, which have filled half their journals, than could poſſibly be compenſated by the poor temporary ſupply which they afforded. It ſeemed as if thoſe who adopted ſuch projects were wholly ignorant of their circumſtances, or wholly unequal to their neceſſities. Whatever virtue may be in theſe devices, it is obvious that neither the patriotic gifts, nor the patriotic contribution, can ever be reſorted to again. The reſources of public folly are ſoon exhauſted. The whole indeed

indeed of their ſcheme of revenue is to make, by any artifice, an appearance of a full reſervoir for the hour, whilſt at the ſame time they cut off the ſprings and living fountains of perennial ſupply. The account not long ſince furniſhed by Mr. Necker was meant, without queſtion, to be favourable. He gives a flattering view of the means of getting through the year; but he expreſſes, as it is natural he ſhould, ſome apprehenſion for that which was to ſucceed. On this laſt prognoſtic, inſtead of entering into the grounds of this apprehenſion, in order by a proper foreſight, to prevent the prognoſticated evil, Mr. Necker receives a ſort of friendly reprimand from the preſident of the aſſembly.

As to their other ſchemes of taxation, it is impoſſible to ſay any thing of them with certainty; becauſe they have not yet had their operation; but nobody is ſo ſanguine as to imagine they will fill up any perceptible part of the wide gaping breach which their incapacity has made in their revenues. At preſent the ſtate of their treaſury ſinks every day more and more in caſh, and ſwells more and more in fictitious repreſentation. When ſo little within or without is now found but paper, the repreſentative not of opulence but of want, the creature not of credit but of power, they imagine that our flouriſhing ſtate in England is owing to that bank-paper, and not the bank-paper to the flouriſhing condition of our commerce, to the ſolidity of our credit, and to the total excluſion of all idea of power from any part of the tranſaction. They forget that, in England, not one ſhilling of paper-money of any deſcription is received but of choice; that the whole has had its origin in caſh actually depoſited; and that it is convertible, at pleaſure, in an inſtant, and without the ſmalleſt loſs, into caſh again. Our paper is of value in commerce, becauſe in law it is of none. It is powerful on Change, becauſe in Weſtminſter-hall it is impotent.

impotent. In payment of a debt of twenty ſhillings, a creditor may refuſe all the paper of the bank of England. Nor is there amongſt us a ſingle public ſecurity, of any quality or nature whatſoever, that is enforced by authority. In fact it might be eaſily ſhewn, that our paper wealth, inſtead of leſſening the real coin, has a tendency to increaſe it; inſtead of being a ſubſtitute for money, it only facilitates its entry, its exit, and its circulation; that it is the ſymbol of proſperity, and not the badge of diſtreſs. Never was a ſcarcity of caſh, and an exuberance of paper, a ſubject of complaint in this nation.

Well! but a leſſening of prodigal expences, and the œconomy which has been introduced by the virtuous and ſapient aſſembly, makes amends for the loſſes ſuſtained in the receipt of revenue. In this at leaſt they have fulfilled the duty of a financier.—Have thoſe, who ſay ſo, looked at the expences of the national aſſembly itſelf? of the municipalities, of the city of Paris? of the increaſed pay of the two armies? of the new police? of the new judicatures? Have they even carefully compared the preſent penſion-liſt with the former? Theſe politicians have been cruel, not œconomical. Comparing the expences of the former prodigal government and its relation to the then revenues with the expences of this new ſyſtem as oppoſed to the ſtate of its new treaſury, I believe the preſent will be found beyond all compariſon more chargeable *.

It

* The reader will obſerve, that I have but lightly touched (my plan demanded nothing more) on the condition of the French finances, as connected with the demands upon them. If I had intended to do otherwiſe, the materials in my hands for ſuch a taſk are not altogether perfect. On this ſubject I refer the reader to M. de Calonne's work; and the tremendous diſplay that he has made of the havock and devaſtation in the public eſtate, and in all the affairs of France, cauſed by the preſumptuous good intentions of ignorance and incapacity. Such effects, thoſe cauſes will always produce. Looking over that account with

It remains only to conſider the proofs of financial ability, furniſhed by the preſent French managers when they are to raiſe ſupplies on credit. Here I am a little at a ſtand; for credit, properly ſpeaking, they have none. The credit of the antient government was not indeed the beſt: but they could always, on ſome terms, command money, not only at home, but from moſt of the countries of Europe where a ſurplus capital was accumulated; and the credit of that government was improving daily. The eſtabliſhment of a ſyſtem of liberty would of courſe be ſuppoſed to give it new ſtrength; and ſo it would actually have done, if a ſyſtem of liberty had been eſtabliſhed. What offers has their government of pretended liberty had from Holland, from Hamburgh, from Switzerland, from Genoa, from England, for a dealing in their paper? Why ſhould theſe nations of commerce and œconomy enter into any pecuniary dealings with a people who attempt to reverſe the very nature of things; amongſt whom they ſee the debtor preſcribing, at the point of the bayonet, the medium of his ſolvency to the creditor; diſcharging one of his engagements with another; turning his very penury into his reſource; and paying his intereſt with his rags?

Their fanatical confidence in the omnipotence of church plunder, has induced theſe philoſophers to overlook all care of the public eſtate, juſt as the dream of the philoſopher's ſtone induces dupes, under the more plauſible deluſion of the hermetic art, to neglect all rational means of improving their fortunes. With theſe philoſophic financiers, this uni-

with a pretty ſtrict eye, and, with perhaps too much rigour, deducting every thing which may be placed to the account of a financier out of place, who might be ſuppoſed by his enemies deſirous of making the moſt of his cauſe, I believe it will be found, that a more ſalutary leſſon of caution againſt the daring ſpirit of innovators than what has been ſupplied at the expence of France, never was at any time furniſhed to mankind.

verſal

verſal medicine made of church mummy is to cure all the evils of the ſtate. Theſe gentlemen perhaps do not believe a great deal in the miracles of piety; but it cannot be queſtioned, that they have an undoubting faith in the prodigies of ſacrilege. Is there a debt which preſſes them—Iſſue *aſſignats*.—Are compenſations to be made, or a maintenance decreed to thoſe whom they have robbed of their freehold in their office, or expelled from their profeſſion—*Aſſignats*. Is a fleet to be fitted out—*Aſſignats*. If ſixteen millions ſterling of theſe *aſſignats*, forced on the people, leave the wants of the ſtate as urgent as ever—iſſue, ſays one, thirty-millions ſterling of *aſſignats*—ſays another, iſſue fourſcore millions more of *aſſignats*. The only difference among their financial factions is on the greater or the leſſer quantity of *aſſignats* to be impoſed on the publick ſufferance. They are all profeſſors of *aſſignats*. Even thoſe, whoſe natural good ſenſe and knowledge of commerce, not obliterated by philoſophy, furniſh deciſive arguments againſt this deluſion, conclude their arguments, by propoſing the emiſſion of *aſſignats*. I ſuppoſe they muſt talk of *aſſignats*, as no other language would be underſtood. All experience of their inefficacy does not in the leaſt diſcourage them. Are the old *aſſignats* depreciated at market? What is the remedy? Iſſue new *aſſignats*.—*Mais ſi maladia, opiniatria, non vult ſe garire, quid illi facere? aſſignare—poſtea aſſignare; enſuita aſſignare.* The word is a trifle altered. The Latin of your preſent doctors may be better than that of your old comedy; their wiſdom, and the variety of their reſources, are the ſame. They have not more notes in their ſong than the cuckow; though, far from the ſoftneſs of that harbinger of ſummer and plenty, their voice is as harſh and as ominous as that of the raven.

Who but the moſt deſperate adventurers in philoſophy and

and finance could at all have thought of deſtroying the ſettled revenue of the ſtate, the ſole ſecurity for the public credit, in the hope of rebuilding it with the materials of confiſcated property? If, however, an exceſſive zeal for the ſtate ſhould have led a pious and venerable prelate (by anticipation a father of the church *) to pillage his own order, and, for the good of the church and people, to take upon himſelf the place of grand financier of confiſcation, and comptroller general of ſacrilege, he and his coadjutors were, in my opinion, bound to ſhew, by their ſubſequent conduct, that they knew ſomething of the office they aſſumed. When they had reſolved to appropriate to the *Fiſc*, a certain portion of the landed property of their conquered country, it was their buſineſs to render their bank a real fund of credit; as far as ſuch a bank was capable of becoming ſo.

To eſtabliſh a current circulating credit upon any *Land-bank*, under any circumſtances whatſoever, has hitherto proved difficult at the very leaſt. The attempt has commonly ended in bankruptcy. But when the aſſembly were led, through a contempt of moral, to a defiance of œconomical principles, it might at leaſt have been expected, that nothing would be omitted on their part to leſſen this difficulty, to prevent any aggravation of this bankruptcy. It might be expected that to render your *Land-bank* tolerable, every means would be adopted that could diſplay openneſs and candour in the ſtatement of the ſecurity; every thing which could aid the recovery of the demand. To take things in their moſt favourable point of view, your condition was that of a man of a large landed eſtate, which he wiſhed to diſpoſe of for the diſcharge of a debt, and the ſupply of certain ſervices. Not being able inſtantly to ſell, you wiſhed to

* La Bruyere of Boſſuet.

mortgage. What would a man of fair intentions, and a commonly clear underſtanding, do in ſuch circumſtances? Ought he not firſt to aſcertain the groſs value of the eſtate; the charges of its management and diſpoſition; the encumbrances perpetual and temporary of all kinds that affect it; then, ſtriking a net ſurplus, to calculate the juſt value of the ſecurity? When that ſurplus (the only ſecurity to the creditor) had been clearly aſcertained, and properly veſted in the hands of truſtees; then he would indicate the parcels to be ſold, and the time, and conditions of ſale; after this, he would admit the public creditor, if he choſe it, to ſubſcribe his ſtock into this new fund; or he might receive propoſals for an *aſſignat* from thoſe who would advance money to purchaſe this ſpecies of ſecurity.

This would be to proceed like men of buſineſs, methodically and rationally; and on the only principles of public and private credit that have an exiſtence. The dealer would then know exactly what he purchaſed; and the only doubt which could hang upon his mind would be, the dread of the reſumption of the ſpoil, which one day might be made (perhaps with an addition of puniſhment) from the ſacrilegious gripe of thoſe execrable wretches who could become purchaſers at the auction of their innocent fellow-citizens.

An open and exact ſtatement of the clear value of the property, and of the time, the circumſtances, and the place of ſale, were all neceſſary, to efface as much as poſſible the ſtigma that has hitherto been branded on every kind of Land-bank. It became neceſſary on another principle, that is, on account of a pledge of faith previouſly given on that ſubject, that their future fidelity in a ſlippery concern might be eſtabliſhed by their adherence to their firſt engagement. When they had finally determined on a ſtate reſource from church

booty,

booty, they came, on the 14th of April 1790, to a ſolemn reſolution on the ſubject; and pledged themſelves to their country, "that in the ſtatement of the public charges for "each year there ſhould be brought to account a ſum ſuffi-"cient for defraying the expences of the R. C. A. religion, "the ſupport of the miniſters at the altars, the relief of the "poor, the penſions to the eccleſiaſtics, ſecular as well as "regular, of the one and of the other ſex, *in order that the "eſtates and goods which are at the diſpoſal of the nation may "be diſengaged of all charges, and employed by the repreſenta-"tives, or the legiſlative body, to the great and moſt preſſing "exigencies of the ſtate.*" They further engaged, on the ſame day, that the ſum neceſſary for the year 1791 ſhould be forthwith determined.

In this reſolution they admit it their duty to ſhew diſtinctly the expence of the above objects, which, by other reſolutions, they had before engaged ſhould be firſt in the order of proviſion. They admit that they ought to ſhew the eſtate clear and diſengaged of all charges, and that they ſhould ſhew it immediately. Have they done this immediately, or at any time? Have they ever furniſhed a rent-roll of the immoveable eſtates, or given in an inventory of the moveable effects which they confiſcate to their aſſignats? In what manner they can fulfil their engagements of holding out to public ſervice "an eſtate diſengaged of all "charges," without authenticating the value of the eſtate, or the quantum of the charges, I leave it to their Engliſh admirers to explain. Inſtantly upon this aſſurance, and previouſly to any one ſtep towards making it good, they iſſue, on the credit of ſo handſome a declaration, ſixteen millions ſterling of their paper. This was manly. Who, after this maſterly ſtroke, can doubt of their abilities in finance?—But then, before any other emiſſion of theſe financial *indulgences*,

they took care at leaſt to make good their original promiſe! —If ſuch eſtimate, either of the value of the eſtate or the amount of the incumbrances, has been made, it has eſcaped me. I never heard of it.

At length they have ſpoken out, and they have made a full diſcovery of their abominable fraud, in holding out the church lands as a ſecurity for any debts or any ſervice whatſoever. They rob only to enable them to cheat; but in a very ſhort time they defeat the ends both of the robbery and the fraud, by making out accounts for other purpoſes, which blow up their whole apparatus of force and of deception. I am obliged to M. de Calonne for his reference to the document which proves this extraordinary fact: it had, by ſome means, eſcaped me. Indeed it was not neceſſary to make out my aſſertion as to the breach of faith on the declaration of the 14th of April 1790. By a report of their committee it now appears, that the charge of keeping up the reduced eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhments, and other expences attendant on religion, and maintaining the religious of both ſexes, retained or penſioned, and the other concomitant expences of the ſame nature, which they have brought upon themſelves by this convulſion in property, exceeds the income of the eſtates acquired by it in the enormous ſum of two millions ſterling annually; beſides a debt of ſeven millions and upwards. Theſe are the calculating powers of impoſture! This is the finance of philoſophy! This is the reſult of all the deluſions held out to engage a miſerable people in rebellion, murder, and ſacrilege, and to make them prompt and zealous inſtruments in the ruin of their country! Never did a ſtate, in any caſe, enrich itſelf by the confiſcations of the citizens. This new experiment has ſucceeded like all the reſt. Every honeſt mind, every true lover of liberty and humanity muſt rejoice to find that injuſtice

injuſtice is not always good policy, nor rapine the high road to riches. I ſubjoin with pleaſure, in a note, the able and ſpirited obſervations of M. de Calonne on this ſubject *.

In order to perſuade the world of the bottomleſs reſource of eccleſiaſtical confiſcation, the aſſembly have proceeded to other confiſcations of eſtates in offices, which could not be done with any common colour without being compenſated out of this grand confiſcation of landed property. They have thrown upon this fund, which was to ſhew a ſurplus, diſengaged of all charges, a new charge; namely, the compenſation to the whole body of the diſbanded judicature; and of all ſuppreſſed offices and eſtates; a charge which I cannot aſcertain, but which unqueſtionably amounts to many French millions. Another of the new charges, is an annuity of four hundred and eighty thouſand pounds ſterling, to be paid (if they chooſe to keep faith) by daily payments, for the intereſt of the firſt aſſignats. Have they

* "Ce n'eſt point à l'aſſemblée entière que je m'adreſſe ici; je ne parle qu'à ceux qui l'égarent, en lui cachant ſous des gazes ſéduiſantes le but où ils l'entraînent. C'eſt à eux que je dis: votre objet, vous n'en diſconviendrez pas, c'eſt d'ôter tout eſpoir au clergé, & de conſommer ſa ruine; c'eſt-la, en ne vous ſoupçonnant d'aucune combinaiſon de cupidité, d'aucun regard ſur le jeu des effets publics, c'eſt-là ce qu'on doit croire que vous avez en vue dans la terrible opération que vous propoſez; c'eſt ce qui doit en être le fruit. Mais le peuple que vous y intéreſſez, quel avantage peut-il y trouver? En vous ſervant ſans ceſſe de lui, que faites vous pour lui? Rien, abſolument rien; &, au contraire, vous faites ce qui ne conduit qu'à l'accabler de nouvelles charges. Vous avez rejeté, à ſon préjudice, une offre de 400 millions, dont l'acceptation pouvoit devenir un moyen de ſoulagement en ſa faveur; & à cette reſſource, auſſi profitable que legitime, vous avez ſubſtitué une injuſtice ruineuſe, qui, de votre propre aveu, charge le tréſor public, & par conſéquent le peuple, d'un ſurcroît de depenſe annuelle de 50 millions au moins, & d'un rembourſement de 150 millions.

"Malheureux peuple, voilà ce que vous vaut en dernier réſultat l'expropriation de l'Egliſe, & la dureté des décrets taxateurs du traitement des miniſtres d'une religion bienfaiſante; & deſormais ils ſeront à votre charge: leurs charités ſoulageoient les pauvres; & vous allez être impoſés pour ſubvenir à leur entretien!"——*De l'Etat de la* France, p. 81. See alſo p. 92, and the following pages.

ever

ever given themſelves the trouble to ſtate fairly the expence of the management of the church lands in the hands of the municipalities, to whoſe care, ſkill, and diligence, and that of their legion of unknown under agents, they have choſen to commit the charge of the forfeited eſtates, and the conſequence of which had been ſo ably pointed out by the biſhop of Nancy?

But it is unneceſſary to dwell on theſe obvious heads of incumbrance. Have they made out any clear ſtate of the grand incumbrance of all, I mean the whole of the general and municipal eſtabliſhments of all ſorts, and compared it with the regular income by revenue? Every deficiency in theſe becomes a charge on the confiſcated eſtate, before the creditor can plant his cabbages on an acre of church property. There is no other prop than this confiſcation to keep the whole ſtate from tumbling to the ground. In this ſituation they have purpoſely covered all that they ought induſtriouſly to have cleared, with a thick fog; and then, blindfold themſelves, like bulls that ſhut their eyes when they puſh, they drive, by the point of the bayonets, their ſlaves, blindfolded indeed no worſe than their lords, to take their fictions for currencies, and to ſwallow down paper pills by thirty-four millions ſterling at a doſe. Then they proudly lay in their claim to a future credit, on failure of all their paſt engagements, and at a time when (if in ſuch a matter any thing can be clear) it is clear that the ſurplus eſtates will never anſwer even the firſt of their mortgages, I mean that of the four hundred million (or ſixteen millions ſterling) of *aſſignats*. In all this procedure I can diſcern neither the ſolid ſenſe of plain-dealing, nor the ſubtle dexterity of ingenious fraud. The objection within the aſſembly to pulling up the flood-gates for this inundation of fraud, are unanſwered; but they are thoroughly refuted by an hundred

thouſand financiers in the ſtreet. Theſe are the numbers by which the metaphyſic arithmeticians compute. Theſe are the grand calculations on which a philoſophical public credit is founded in France. They cannot raiſe ſupplies; but they can raiſe mobs. Let them rejoice in the applauſes of the club at Dundee, for their wiſdom and patriotiſm in having thus applied the plunder of the citizens to the ſervice of the ſtate. I hear of no addreſs upon this ſubject from the directors of the Bank of England; though their approbation would be of a *little* more weight in the ſcale of credit than that of the club at Dundee. But, to do juſtice to the club, I believe the gentlemen who compoſe it to be wiſer than they appear; that they will be leſs liberal of their money than of their addreſſes; and that they would not give a dog's-ear of their moſt rumpled and ragged Scotch paper for twenty of your faireſt aſſignats.

Early in this year the aſſembly iſſued paper to the amount of ſixteen millions ſterling: What muſt have been the ſtate into which the aſſembly has brought your affairs, that the relief afforded by ſo vaſt a ſupply has been hardly perceptible? This paper alſo felt an almoſt immediate depreciation of five per cent. which in little time came to about ſeven. The effect of theſe aſſignats on the receipt of the revenue is remarkable. Mr. Necker found that the collectors of the revenue, who received in coin, paid the treaſury in *aſſignats*. The collectors made ſeven per cent. by thus receiving in money, and accounting in depreciated paper. It was not very difficult to foreſee, that this muſt be inevitable. It was, however, not the leſs embarraſſing. Mr. Necker was obliged (I believe, for a conſiderable part, in the market of London) to buy gold and ſilver for the mint, which amounted to about twelve thouſand pounds above the value of the commodity gained. That miniſter was of opinion, that whatever

whatever their ſecret nutritive virtue might be, the ſtate could not live upon *aſſignats* alone; that ſome real ſilver was neceſſary, particularly for the ſatisfaction of thoſe, who having iron in their hands, were not likely to diſtinguiſh themſelves for patience, when they ſhould perceive that whilſt an encreaſe of pay was held out to them in real money, it was again to be fraudulently drawn back by depreciated paper. The miniſter, in this very natural diſtreſs, applied to the aſſembly, that they ſhould order the collectors to pay in ſpecie what in ſpecie they had received. It could not eſcape him, that if the treaſury paid 3 per cent. for the uſe of a currency, which ſhould be returned ſeven per cent. worſe than the miniſter iſſued it, ſuch a dealing could not very greatly tend to enrich the public. The aſſembly took no notice of his recommendation. They were in this dilemma —If they continued to receive the aſſignats, caſh muſt become an alien to their treaſury: If the treaſury ſhould refuſe thoſe paper *amulets*, or ſhould diſcountenance them in any degree, they muſt deſtroy the credit of their ſole reſource. They ſeem then to have made their option; and to have given ſome ſort of credit to their paper by taking it themſelves; at the ſame time in their ſpeeches they made a ſort of ſwaggering declaration, ſomething, I rather think, above legiſlative competence; that is, that there is no difference in value between metallic money and their aſſignats. This was a good ſtout proof article of faith, pronounced under an anathema, by the venerable fathers of this philoſophic ſynod. *Credat* who will—certainly not *Judæus Apella*.

A noble indignation riſes in the minds of your popular leaders, on hearing the magic lanthorn in their ſhew of finance compared to the fraudulent exhibitions of Mr. Law. They cannot bear to hear the ſands of his Miſſiſſippi compared with the rock of the church, on which they build their

their ſyſtem. Pray let them ſuppreſs this glorious ſpirit, until they ſhew to the world what piece of ſolid ground there is for their aſſignats, which they have not pre-occupied by other charges. They do injuſtice to that great, mother fraud, to compare it with their degenerate imitation. It is not true, that Law built ſolely on a ſpeculation concerning the Miſſiſſippi. He added the Eaſt India trade; he added the African trade; he added the farms of all the farmed revenue of France. All theſe together unqueſtionably could not ſupport the ſtructure which the public enthuſiaſm, not he, choſe to build upon theſe baſes. But theſe were, however, in compariſon, generous deluſions. They ſuppoſed, and they aimed at an increaſe of the commerce of France. They opened to it the whole range of the two hemiſpheres. They did not think of feeding France from its own ſubſtance. A grand imagination found in this flight of commerce ſomething to captivate. It was wherewithal to dazzle the eye of an eagle. It was not made to entice the ſmell of a mole, nuzzling and burying himſelf in his mother earth, as yours is. Men were not then quite ſhrunk from their natural dimenſions by a degrading and ſordid philoſophy, and fitted for low and vulgar deceptions. Above all remember, that in impoſing on the imagination, the then managers of the ſyſtem made a complement to the freedom of men. In their fraud there was no mixture of force. This was reſerved to our time, to quench the little glimmerings of reaſon which might break in upon the ſolid darkneſs of this enlightened age.

On recollection, I have ſaid nothing of a ſcheme of finance which may be urged in favour of the abilities of theſe gentlemen, and which has been introduced with great pomp, though not yet finally adopted in the nationa aſſembly. It comes with ſomething ſolid in aid of the credit of the paper

circulation; and much has been ſaid of its utility and its elegance. I mean the project for coining into money the bells of the ſuppreſſed churches. This is their alchymy. There are ſome follies which baffle argument; which go beyond ridicule; and which excite no feeling in us but diſguſt; and therefore I ſay no more upon it.

It is as little worth remarking any farther upon all their drawing and re-drawing, on their circulation for putting off the evil day, on the play between the treaſury and the *Caiſſe d'Eſcompte*, and on all theſe old exploded contrivances of mercantile fraud, now exalted into policy of ſtate. The revenue will not be trifled with. The prattling about the rights of men will not be accepted in payment for a biſcuit or a pound of gunpowder. Here then the metaphyſicians deſcend from their airy ſpeculations, and faithfully follow examples. What examples? the examples of bankrupts. But defeated, baffled, diſgraced, when their breath, their ſtrength, their inventions, their fancies deſert them, their confidence ſtill maintains its ground. In the manifeſt failure of their abilities they take credit for their benevolence. When the revenue diſappears in their hands, they have the preſumption, in ſome of their late proceedings, to value *themſelves* on the relief given to the people. They did not relieve the people. If they entertained ſuch intentions, why did they order the obnoxious taxes to be paid? The people relieved themſelves in ſpite of the aſſembly.

But waving all diſcuſſion on the parties, who may claim the merit of this fallacious relief, has there been, in effect, any relief to the people in any form? Mr. Bailly, one of the grand agents of paper circulation, lets you into the nature of this relief. His ſpeech to the national aſſembly contained an high and laboured panegyric on the inhabitants of Paris for the conſtancy and unbroken reſolution with which they

have borne their diſtreſs and miſery. A fine picture of public felicity! What! great courage and unconquerable firmneſs of mind to endure benefits, and ſuſtain redreſs! One would think from the ſpeech of this learned lord mayor, that the Pariſians, for this twelvemonth paſt, had been ſuffering the ſtraits of ſome dreadful blockade; that Henry the Fourth had been ſtopping up the avenues to their ſupply, and Sully thundering with his ordnance at the gates of Paris; when in reality they are beſieged by no other enemies than their own madneſs and folly, their own credulity and perverſeneſs. But Mr. Bailly will ſooner thaw the eternal ice of his atlantic regions, than reſtore the central heat to Paris, whilſt it remains "ſmitten with the cold, dry, petrifick "mace" of a falſe and unfeeling philoſophy. Some time after this ſpeech, that is, on the thirteenth of laſt Auguſt, the ſame magiſtrate, giving an account of his government at the bar of the ſame aſſembly, expreſſes himſelf as follows: "In "the month of July 1789," [the period of everlaſting commemoration] "the finances of the city of Paris were *yet* in "good order; the expenditure was counterbalanced by the "receipt, and ſhe had at that time a million [forty thouſand pounds ſterling] "in bank. The expences which ſhe has "been conſtrained to incur, *ſubſequent to the revolution*, "amount to 2,500,000 livres. From theſe expences, and "the great falling off in the product of the *free gifts*, not "only a momentary but a *total* want of money has taken "place." This is the Paris upon whoſe nouriſhment, in the courſe of the laſt year, ſuch immenſe ſums, drawn from the vitals of all France, has been expended. As long as Paris ſtands in the place of antient Rome, ſo long ſhe will be maintained by the ſubject provinces. It is an evil inevitably attendant on the dominion of ſovereign democratic republics. As it happened in Rome, it may ſurvive that repub-

lican domination which gave riſe to it. In that caſe deſpotiſm itſelf muſt ſubmit to the vices of popularity. Rome, under her emperors, united the evils of both ſyſtems; and this unnatural combination was one great cauſe of her ruin.

To tell the people that they are relieved by the dilapidation of their public eſtate, is a cruel and inſolent impoſition. Stateſmen, before they valued themſelves on the relief given to the people by the deſtruction of their revenue, ought firſt to have carefully attended to the ſolution of this problem:—Whether it be more advantageous to the people to pay conſiderably, and to gain in proportion; or to gain little or nothing, and to be diſburthened of all contribution? My mind is made up to decide in favour of the firſt propoſition. Experience is with me, and, I believe, the beſt opinions alſo. To keep a balance between the power of acquiſition on the part of the ſubject, and the demands he is to anſwer on the part of the ſtate, is a fundamental part of the ſkill of a true politician. The means of acquiſition are prior in time and in arrangement. Good order is the foundation of all good things. To be enabled to acquire, the people, without being ſervile, muſt be tractable and obedient. The magiſtrate muſt have his reverence, the laws their authority. The body of the people muſt not find the principles of natural ſubordination by art rooted out of their minds. They muſt reſpect that property of which they cannot partake. They muſt labour to obtain what by labour can be obtained; and when they find, as they commonly do, the ſucceſs diſproportioned to the endeavour, they muſt be taught their conſolation in the final proportions of eternal juſtice. Of this conſolation, whoever deprives them, deadens their induſtry, and ſtrikes at the root of all acquiſition as of all conſervation. He that does this is the cruel oppreſſor, the mercileſs enemy of the poor and wretched; at the ſame time that by his wicked

wicked ſpeculations he expoſes the fruits of ſucceſsful induſtry, and the accumulations of fortune, to the plunder of the negligent, the diſappointed, and the unproſperous.

Too many of the financiers by profeſſion are apt to ſee nothing in revenue, but banks, and circulations, and annuities on lives, and tontines, and perpetual rents, and all the ſmall wares of the ſhop. In a ſettled order of the ſtate, theſe things are not to be ſlighted, nor is the ſkill in them to be held of trivial eſtimation. They are good, but then only good, when they aſſume the effects of that ſettled order, and are built upon it. But when men think that theſe beggarly contrivances may ſupply a reſource for the evils which reſult from breaking up the foundations of public order, and from cauſing or ſuffering the principles of property to be ſubverted, they will, in the ruin of their country, leave a melancholy and laſting monument of the effect of prepoſterous politics, and preſumptuous, ſhort-ſighted, narrow-minded wiſdom.

The effects of the incapacity ſhewn by the popular leaders in all the great members of the commonwealth are to be covered with the "all-atoning name" of liberty. In ſome people I ſee great liberty indeed; in many, if not in the moſt, an oppreſſive degrading ſervitude. But what is liberty without wiſdom, and without virtue? It is the greateſt of all poſſible evils; for it is folly, vice, and madneſs, without tuition or reſtraint. Thoſe who know what virtuous liberty is, cannot bear to ſee it diſgraced by incapable heads, on account of their having high-ſounding words in their mouths. Grand, ſwelling ſentiments of liberty, I am ſure I do not deſpiſe. They warm the heart; they enlarge and liberalize our minds; they animate our courage in a time of conflict. Old as I am, I read the fine raptures of Lucan and Corneille with pleaſure. Neither do I wholly condemn the little arts

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and devices of popularity. They facilitate the carrying of many points of moment; they keep the people together; they refreſh the mind in its exertions; and they diffuſe occaſional gaiety over the ſevere brow of moral freedom. Every politician ought to ſacrifice to the graces; and to join compliance with reaſon. But in ſuch an undertaking as that in France, all theſe ſubſidiary ſentiments and artifices are of little avail. To make a government requires no great prudence. Settle the ſeat of power; teach obedience: and the work is done. To give freedom is ſtill more eaſy. It is not neceſſary to guide; it only requires to let go the rein. But to form a *free government*; that is, to temper together theſe oppoſite elements of liberty and reſtraint in one conſiſtent work, requires much thought, deep reflection, a ſagacious, powerful, and combining mind. This I do not find in thoſe who take the lead in the national aſſembly. Perhaps they are not ſo miſerably deficient as they appear. I rather believe it. It would put them below the common level of human underſtanding. But when the leaders chooſe to make themſelves bidders at an auction of popularity, their talents, in the conſtruction of the ſtate, will be of no ſervice. They will become flatterers inſtead of legiſlators; the inſtruments, not the guides of the people. If any of them ſhould happen to propoſe a ſcheme of liberty, ſoberly limited, and defined with proper qualifications, he will be immediately outbid by his competitors, who will produce ſomething more ſplendidly popular. Suſpicions will be raiſed of his fidelity to his cauſe. Moderation will be ſtigmatized as the virtue of cowards; and compromiſe as the prudence of traitors; until, in hopes of preſerving the credit which may enable him to temper and moderate on ſome occaſions, the popular leader is obliged to become active in propagating doctrines, and eſtabliſhing powers, that will afterwards

defeat

defeat any ſober purpoſe at which he ultimately might have aimed.

But am I ſo unreaſonable as to ſee nothing at all that deſerves commendation in the indefatigable labours of this aſſembly? I do not deny that among an infinite number of acts of violence and folly, ſome good may have been done. They who deſtroy every thing certainly will remove ſome grievance. They who make every thing new, have a chance that they may eſtabliſh ſomething beneficial. To give them credit for what they have done in virtue of the authority they have uſurped, or which can excuſe them in the crimes by which that authority has been acquired, it muſt appear, that the ſame things could not have been accompliſhed without producing ſuch a revolution. Moſt aſſuredly they might; becauſe almoſt every one of the regulations made by them, which is not very equivocal, was either in the ceſſion of the king, voluntarily made at the meeting of the ſtates, or in the concurrent inſtructions to the orders. Some uſages have been aboliſhed on juſt grounds; but they were ſuch that if they had ſtood as they were to all eternity, they would little detract from the happineſs and proſperity of any ſtate. The improvements of the national aſſembly are ſuperficial, their errors fundamental.

Whatever they are, I wiſh my countrymen rather to recommend to our neighbours the example of the Britiſh conſtitution, than to take models from them for the improvement of our own. In the former they have got an invaluable treaſure. They are not, I think, without ſome cauſes of apprehenſion and complaint; but theſe they do not owe to their conſtitution, but to their own conduct. I think our happy ſituation owing to our conſtitution; but owing to the whole of it, and not to any part ſingly; owing in a great meaſure to what we have left ſtanding in our ſeveral reviews

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and reformations, as well as to what we have altered or ſuperadded. Our people will find employment enough for a truly patriotic, free, and independent ſpirit, in guarding what they poſſeſs, from violation. I would not exclude alteration neither; but even when I changed, it ſhould be to preſerve. I ſhould be led to my remedy by a great grievance. In what I did, I ſhould follow the example of our anceſtors. I would make the reparation as nearly as poſſible in the ſtyle of the building. A politic caution, a guarded circumſpection, a moral rather than a complexional timidity were among the ruling principles of our forefathers in their moſt decided conduct. Not being illuminated with the light of which the gentlemen of France tell us they have got ſo abundant a ſhare, they acted under a ſtrong impreſſion of the ignorance and fallibility of mankind. He that had made them thus fallible, rewarded them for having in their conduct attended to their nature. Let us imitate their caution, if we wiſh to deſerve their fortune, or to retain their bequeſts. Let us add, if we pleaſe, but let us preſerve what they have left; and, ſtanding on the firm ground of the Britiſh conſtitution, let us be ſatisfied to admire rather than attempt to follow in their deſperate flights the aëronauts of France.

I have told you candidly my ſentiments. I think they are not likely to alter yours. I do not know that they ought. You are young; you cannot guide, but muſt follow the fortune of your country. But hereafter they may be of ſome uſe to you, in ſome future form which your commonwealth may take. In the preſent it can hardly remain; but before its final ſettlement it may be obliged to paſs, as one of our poets ſays, "through great varieties of untried being," and in all its tranſmigrations to be purified by fire and blood.

I have

I have little to recommend my opinions, but long obſervation and much impartiality. They come from one who has been no tool of power, no flatterer of greatneſs; and who in his laſt acts does not wiſh to belye the tenour of his life. They come from one, almoſt the whole of whoſe public exertion has been a ſtruggle for the liberty of others; from one in whoſe breaſt no anger durable or vehement has ever been kindled, but by what he conſidered as tyranny; and who ſnatches from his ſhare in the endeavours which are uſed by good men to diſcredit opulent oppreſſion, the hours he has employed on your affairs; and who in ſo doing perſuades himſelf he has not departed from his uſual office: they come from one who deſires honours, diſtinctions, and emoluments, but little; and who expects them not at all; who has no contempt for fame, and no fear of obloquy; who ſhuns contention, though he will hazard an opinion: from one who wiſhes to preſerve conſiſtency; but who would preſerve conſiſtency by varying his means to ſecure the unity of his end; and, when the equipoiſe of the veſſel in which he ſails, may be endangered by overloading it upon one ſide, is deſirous of carrying the ſmall weight of his reaſons to that which may preſerve its equipoiſe.

A

LETTER

FROM

Mr. BURKE,

TO A

MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY;

IN ANSWER TO

SOME OBJECTIONS TO HIS

BOOK ON FRENCH AFFAIRS.

1791.

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SIR,

I HAD the honour to receive your letter of the 17th of November laſt, in which, with ſome exceptions, you are pleaſed to conſider favourably the letter I have written on the affairs of France. I ſhall ever accept any mark of approbation, attended with inſtruction, with more pleaſure than general and unqualified praiſes. The latter can ſerve only to flatter our vanity; the former, whilſt it encourages us to proceed, may help to improve us in our progreſs.

Some of the errors you point out to me in my printed letter are really ſuch. One only I find to be material. It is corrected in the edition which I take the liberty of ſending to you. As to the cavils which may be made on ſome part of my remarks, with regard to the *gradations* in your new conſtitution, you obſerve juſtly, that they do not affect the ſubſtance of my objections. Whether there be a round more or leſs in the ladder of repreſentation, by which your workmen aſcend from their parochial tyranny to their federal anarchy, when the whole ſcale is falſe, appears to me of little or no importance.

I publiſhed my thoughts on that conſtitution, that my countrymen might be enabled to eſtimate the wiſdom of the plans which were held out to their imitation. I conceived that the true character of thoſe plans would be beſt collected from the committee appointed to prepare them. I thought that the ſcheme of their building would be better comprehended in the deſign of the architects than in the execution of the maſons. It was not worth my reader's while to occupy himſelf with the alterations by which bungling practice

tice corrects abſurd theory. Such an inveſtigation would be endleſs: becauſe every day's paſt experience of impracticability has driven, and every day's future experience will drive, thoſe men to new devices as exceptionable as the old; and which are no otherwiſe worthy of obſervation than as they give a daily proof of the deluſion of their promiſes, and the falſehood of their profeſſions. Had I followed all theſe changes, my letter would have been only a gazette of their wanderings; a journal of their march from error to error, through a dry dreary deſart, unguided by the lights of heaven, or by the contrivance which wiſdom has invented to ſupply their place.

I am unalterably perſuaded, that the attempt to oppreſs, degrade, impoveriſh, confiſcate, and extinguiſh the original gentlemen, and landed property of an whole nation, cannot be juſtified under any form it may aſſume. I am ſatisfied beyond a doubt, that the project of turning a great empire into a veſtry, or into a collection of veſtries, and of governing it in the ſpirit of a parochial adminiſtration, is ſenſeleſs and abſurd, in any mode, or with any qualifications. I can never be convinced, that the ſcheme of placing the higheſt powers of the ſtate in churchwardens and conſtables, and other ſuch officers, guided by the prudence of litigious attornies, and Jew brokers, and ſet in action by ſhameleſs women of the loweſt condition, by keepers of hotels, taverns, and brothels, by pert apprentices, by clerks, ſhop-boys, hair-dreſſers, fidlers, and dancers on the ſtage, (who, in ſuch a commonwealth as your's, will in future overbear, as already they have overborne, the ſober incapacity of dull uninſtructed men, of uſeful but laborious occupations) can never be put into any ſhape, that muſt not be both diſgraceful and deſtructive. The whole of this project, even if it were what it pretends to be, and was not in reality the dominion,

minion, through that diſgraceful medium, of half a dozen, or perhaps fewer, intriguing politicians, is ſo mean, ſo low-minded, ſo ſtupid a contrivance, in point of wiſdom, as well as ſo perfectly deteſtable for its wickedneſs, that I muſt always conſider the correctives which might make it in any degree practicable, to be ſo many new objections to it.

In that wretched ſtate of things, ſome are afraid that the authors of your miſeries may be led to precipitate their further deſigns, by the hints they may receive from the very arguments uſed to expoſe the abſurdity of their ſyſtem, to mark the incongruity of its parts, and its inconſiſtency with their own principles; and that your maſters may be led to render their ſchemes more conſiſtent, by rendering them more miſchievous. Excuſe the liberty which your indulgence authorizes me to take, when I obſerve to you, that ſuch apprehenſions as theſe would prevent all exertion of our faculties in this great cauſe of mankind.

A raſh recourſe to *force* is not to be juſtified in a ſtate of real weakneſs. Such attempts bring on diſgrace; and, in their failure, diſcountenance and diſcourage more rational endeavours. But *reaſon* is to be hazarded, though it may be perverted by craft and ſophiſtry; for reaſon can ſuffer no loſs nor ſhame, nor can it impede any uſeful plan of future policy. In the unavoidable uncertainty, as to the effect, which attends on every meaſure of human prudence, nothing ſeems a ſurer antidote to the poiſon of fraud than its detection. It is true the fraud may be ſwallowed after this diſcovery; and perhaps even ſwallowed the more greedily for being a detected fraud. Men ſometimes make a point of honour not to be diſabuſed; and they had rather fall into an hundred errors than confeſs one. But after all,—when neither our principles nor our diſpoſitions, nor, perhaps, our talents, enable us to encounter deluſion with deluſion, we

muſt uſe our beſt reaſon to thoſe that ought to be reaſonable creatures, and to take our chance for the event. We cannot act on theſe anomalies in the minds of men. I do not conceive that the perſons who have contrived theſe things can be made much the better or the worſe for any thing which can be ſaid to them. *They* are reaſon proof. Here and there, ſome men, who were at firſt carried away by wild good intentions, may be led, when their firſt fervors are abated, to join in a ſober ſurvey of the ſchemes into which they had been deluded. To thoſe only (and I am ſorry to ſay they are not likely to make a large deſcription) we apply with any hope. I may ſpeak it upon an aſſurance almoſt approaching to abſolute knowledge, that nothing has been done that has not been contrived from the beginning, even before the ſtates had aſſembled. *Nulla nova mihi res inopinave ſurgit.* They are the ſame men and the ſame deſigns that they were from the firſt, though varied in their appearance. It was the very ſame animal that at firſt crawled about in the ſhape of a caterpillar, that you now ſee riſe into the air, and expand his wings to the ſun.

Proceeding, therefore, as we are obliged to proceed, that is upon an hypotheſis that we addreſs rational men, can falſe political principles be more effectually expoſed, than by demonſtrating that they lead to conſequences directly inconſiſtent with and ſubverſive of the arrangements grounded upon them? If this kind of demonſtration is not permitted, the proceſs of reaſoning called *deductio ad abſurdum*, which even the ſeverity of geometry does not reject, could not be employed at all in legiſlative diſcuſſions. One of our ſtrongeſt weapons againſt folly acting with authority, would be loſt.

You know, Sir, that even the virtuous efforts of you patriots to prevent the ruin of your country have had this very turn

turn given to them. It has been ſaid here, and in France too, that the reigning uſurpers would not have carried their tyranny to ſuch deſtructive lengths, if they had not been ſtimulated and provoked to it by the acrimony of your oppoſition. There is a dilemma to which every oppoſition to ſucceſsful iniquity muſt, in the nature of things, be liable. If you lie ſtill, you are conſidered as an accomplice in the meaſures in which you ſilently acquieſce. If you reſiſt, you are accuſed of provoking irritable power to new exceſſes. The conduct of a loſing party never appears right: at leaſt it never can poſſeſs the only infallible criterion of wiſdom to vulgar judgments—ſucceſs.

The indulgence of a ſort of undefined hope, an obſcure confidence, that ſome lurking remains of virtue, ſome degree of ſhame, might exiſt in the breaſts of the oppreſſors of France, has been among the cauſes which have helped to bring on the common ruin of king and people. There is no ſafety for honeſt men, but by believing all poſſible evil of evil men, and by acting with promptitude, deciſion, and ſteadineſs on that belief. I well remember, at every epocha of this wonderful hiſtory, in every ſcene of this tragic buſineſs, that when your ſophiſtic uſurpers were laying down miſchievous principles, and even applying them in direct reſolutions, it was the faſhion to ſay, that they never intended to execute thoſe declarations in their rigour. This made men cautious in their oppoſition, and remiſs in early precaution. By holding out this fallacious hope, the impoſtors deluded ſometimes one deſcription of men, and ſometimes another, ſo that no means of reſiſtance were provided againſt them, when they came to execute in cruelty what they had planned in fraud.

There are caſes in which a man would be aſhamed not to have been impoſed on. There is a confidence neceſſary to

human intercourſe, and without which men are often more injured by their own ſuſpicions than they could be by the perfidy of others. But when men, whom we *know* to be wicked, impoſe upon us, we are ſomething worſe than dupes. When we know them, their fair pretences become new motives for diſtruſt. There is one caſe, indeed, in which it would be madneſs not to give the fulleſt credit to the moſt deceitful of men, that is, when they make declarations of hoſtility againſt us.

I find, that ſome perſons entertain other hopes, which I confeſs appear more ſpecious than thoſe by which at firſt ſo many were deluded and diſarmed. They flatter themſelves that the extreme miſery brought upon the people by their folly, will at laſt open the eyes of the multitude, if not of their leaders. Much the contrary, I fear. As to the leaders in this ſyſtem of impoſture,—you know, that cheats and deceivers never can repent. The fraudulent have no reſource but in fraud. They have no other goods in their magazine. They have no virtue or wiſdom in their minds, to which, in a diſappointment concerning the profitable effects of fraud and cunning, they can retreat. The wearing out of an old, ſerves only to put them upon the invention of a new deluſion. Unluckily too, the credulity of dupes is as inexhauſtible as the invention of knaves. They never give people poſſeſſion; but they always keep them in hope. Your ſtate doctors do not ſo much as pretend that any good whatſoever has hitherto been derived from their operations, or that the public has proſpered in any one inſtance, under their management. The nation is ſick, very ſick, by their medicines. But the *charlatan* tells them that what is paſt cannot be helped;—they have taken the draught, and they muſt wait its operation with patience;—that the firſt effects indeed are unpleaſant, but that the very ſickneſs is a proof

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that the doſe is of no ſluggiſh operation;—that ſickneſs is inevitable in all conſtitutional revolutions;—that the body muſt paſs through pain to eaſe;—that the preſcriber is not an empirick who proceeds by vulgar experience, but one who grounds his practice on * the ſure rules of art, which cannot poſſibly fail. You have read, Sir, the laſt manifeſto, or mountebank's bill, of the national aſſembly. You ſee their preſumption in their promiſes is not leſſened by all their failures in the performance. Compare this laſt addreſs of the aſſembly, and the preſent ſtate of your affairs, with the early engagements of that body; engagements which, not content with declaring, they ſolemnly depoſed upon oath, ſwearing luſtily that if they were ſupported they would make their country glorious and happy; and then judge whether thoſe who can write ſuch things, or thoſe who can bear to read them, are of *themſelves* to be brought to any reaſonable courſe of thought or action.

As to the people at large, when once theſe miſerable ſheep have broken the fold, and have got themſelves looſe, not from the reſtraint, but from the protection of all the principles of natural authority, and legitimate ſubordination, they become the natural prey of impoſtors. When they have once taſted of the flattery of knaves, they can no longer endure reaſon, which appears to them only in the form of cenſure and reproach. Great diſtreſs has never hitherto taught, and whilſt the world laſts it never will teach, wiſe leſſons to any part of mankind. Men are as much blinded by the extremes of miſery as by the extremes of proſperity. Deſperate ſituations produce deſperate councils, and deſ-

* It is ſaid in the laſt quackiſh addreſs of the national aſſembly to the people of France; that they have not formed their arrangements upon vulgar practice; but on a theory which cannot fail, or ſomething to that effect.

perate meaſures. The people of France, almoſt generally, have been taught to look for other reſources than thoſe which can be derived from order, frugality, and induſtry. They are generally armed; and they are made to expect much from the uſe of arms. *Nihil non arrogant armis.* Beſides this, the retrograde order of ſociety has ſomething flattering to the diſpoſitions of mankind. The life of adventurers, gameſters, gipſies, beggars, and robbers, is not unpleaſant. It requires reſtraint to keep men from falling into that habit. The ſhifting tides of fear and hope, the flight and purſuit, the peril and eſcape, the alternate famine and feaſt, of the ſavage and the thief, after a time, render all courſe of ſlow, ſteady, progreſſive, unvaried occupation, and the proſpect only of a limited mediocrity at the end of long labour, to the laſt degree tame, languid, and inſipid. Thoſe who have been once intoxicated with power, and have derived any kind of emolument from it, even though but for one year, never can willingly abandon it. They may be diſtreſſed in the midſt of all their power; but they will never look to any thing but power for their relief. When did diſtreſs ever oblige a prince to abdicate his authority? And what effect will it have upon thoſe who are made to believe themſelves a people of princes?

The more active and ſtirring part of the lower orders having got government, and the diſtribution of plunder, into their hands, they will uſe its reſources in each municipality to form a body of adherents. Theſe rulers, and their adherents, will be ſtrong enough to overpower the diſcontents of thoſe who have not been able to aſſert their ſhare of the ſpoil. The unfortunate adventurers in the cheating lottery of plunder will probably be the leaſt ſagacious, or the moſt inactive and irreſolute of the gang. If, on diſappointment, they ſhould dare to ſtir, they will ſoon be ſuppreſſed

preſſed as rebels and mutineers by their brother rebels. Scantily fed for a while, with the offal of plunder, they will drop off by degrees; they will be driven out of ſight, and out of thought; and they will be left to periſh obſcurely, like rats, in holes and corners.

From the forced repentance of invalid mutineers and diſbanded thieves, you can hope for no reſource. Government itſelf, which ought to conſtrain the more bold and dextrous of theſe robbers, is their accomplice. Its arms, its treaſures, its all, are in their hands. Judicature, which above all things ſhould awe them, is their creature and their inſtrument. Nothing ſeems to me to render your internal ſituation more deſperate than this one circumſtance of the ſtate of your judicature. Many days are not paſt ſince we have ſeen a ſet of men brought forth by your rulers for a moſt critical function. Your rulers brought forth a ſet of men, ſteaming from the ſweat and drudgery, and all black with the ſmoak and ſoot of the forge of confiſcation and robbery —*ardentis maſſæ fuligine lippos*, a ſet of men brought forth from the trade of hammering arms of proof, offenſive and defenſive, in aid of the enterprizes, and for the ſubſequent protection of houſebreakers, murderers, traitors, and malefactors; men, who had their minds ſeaſoned with theories perfectly conformable to their practice, and who had always laughed at poſſeſſion and preſcription, and defied all the fundamental maxims of juriſprudence. To the horror and ſtupefaction of all the honeſt part of this nation, and indeed of all nations who are ſpectators, we have ſeen, on the credit of thoſe very practices and principles, and to carry them further into effect, theſe very men placed on the ſacred ſeat of juſtice in the capital city of your late kingdom. We ſee, that in future, you are to be deſtroyed with more form and regularity. This is not peace; it is only the introduction of

a ſort

a ſort of diſcipline in their hoſtility. Their tyranny is complete, in their juſtice; and their lanthorn is not half ſo dreadful as their court.

One would think that out of common decency they would have given you men who had not been in the habit of trampling upon law and juſtice in the aſſembly, neutral men, or men apparently neutral, for judges, who are to diſpoſe of your lives and fortunes.

Cromwell, when he attempted to legalize his power, and to ſettle his conquered country in a ſtate of order, did not look for diſpenſers of juſtice in the inſtruments of his uſurpation. Quite the contrary. He ſought out with great ſolicitude and ſelection, and even from the party moſt oppoſite to his deſigns, men of weight, and decorum of character; men unſtained with the violence of the times, and with hands not fouled with confiſcation and ſacrilege: for he choſe an *Hales* for his chief juſtice, though he abſolutely refuſed to take his civic oaths, or to make any acknowledgment whatſoever of the legality of his government. Cromwell told this great lawyer, that ſince he did not approve his title, all he required of him was, to adminiſter, in a manner agreeable to his pure ſentiments and unſpotted character, that juſtice without which human ſociety cannot ſubſiſt: that it was not his particular government, but civil order itſelf, which as a judge he wiſhed him to ſupport. Cromwell knew how to ſeparate the inſtitutions expedient to his uſurpation from the adminiſtration of the public juſtice of his country. For Cromwell was a man in whom ambition had not wholly ſuppreſſed, but only ſuſpended the ſentiments of religion, and the love (as far as it could conſiſt with his deſigns) of fair and honourable reputation. Accordingly, we are indebted to this act of his for the preſervation of our laws, which ſome ſenſeleſs aſſertors of the rights

rights of men were then on the point of entirely eraſing, as relics of feudality and barbariſm. Beſides, he gave in the appointment of that man, to that age, and to all poſterity, the moſt brilliant example of ſincere and fervent piety, exact juſtice, and profound juriſprudence *. But theſe are not the things in which your philoſophic uſurpers chooſe to follow Cromwell.

One would think, that after an honeſt and neceſſary revolution (if they had a mind that theirs ſhould paſs for ſuch) your maſters would have imitated the virtuous policy of thoſe who have been at the head of revolutions of that glorious character. Burnet tells us, that nothing tended to reconcile the Engliſh nation to the government of king William ſo much as the care he took to fill the vacant biſhoprics with men who had attracted the public eſteem by their learning, eloquence, and piety, and above all, by their known moderation in the ſtate. With you, in your purifying revolution, whom have you choſen to regulate the church? Mr. Mirabeau is a fine ſpeaker—and a fine writer,—and a fine—a very fine man;—but really nothing gave more ſurprize to every body here, than to find him the ſupreme head of your eccleſiaſtical affairs. The reſt is of courſe. Your aſſembly addreſſes a manifeſto to France, in which they tell the people, with an inſulting irony, that they have brought the church to its primitive condition. In one reſpect their declaration is undoubtedly true; for they have brought it to a ſtate of poverty and perſecution. What can be hoped for after this? Have not men (if they deſerve the name) under this new hope and head of the church, been made biſhops, for no other merit than having acted as inſtruments of atheiſts; for no other merit than having thrown the children's bread to dogs; and in order to gorge

* See Burnet's life of Hales.

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the whole gang of uſurers, pedlars, and itinerant Jew-diſcounters at the corners of ſtreets, ſtarved the poor of their Chriſtian flocks, and their own brother paſtors? Have not ſuch men been made biſhops to adminiſter in temples, in which (if the patriotic donations have not already ſtripped them of their veſſels) the churchwardens ought to take ſecurity for the altar plate, and not ſo much as to truſt the chalice in their ſacrilegious hands, ſo long as Jews have aſſignats on eccleſiaſtic plunder, to exchange for the ſilver ſtolen from churches?

I am told, that the very ſons of ſuch Jew-jobbers have been made biſhops; perſons not to be ſuſpected of any ſort of *Chriſtian* ſuperſtition, fit colleagues to the holy prelate of Autun; and bred at the feet of that Gamaliel. We know who it was that drove the money-changers out of the temple. We ſee too who it is that brings them in again. We have in London very reſpectable perſons of the Jewiſh nation, whom we will keep: but we have of the ſame tribe others of a very different deſcription,—houſebreakers, and receivers of ſtolen goods, and forgers of paper currency, more than we can conveniently hang. Theſe we can ſpare to France, to fill the new epiſcopal thrones: men well verſed in ſwearing; and who will ſcruple no oath which the fertile genius of any of your reformers can deviſe.

In matters ſo ridiculous, it is hard to be grave. On a view of their conſequences it is almoſt inhuman to treat them lightly. To what a ſtate of ſavage, ſtupid, ſervile inſenſibility muſt your people be reduced, who can endure ſuch proceedings in their church, their ſtate, and their judicature, even for a moment! But the deluded people of France are like other madmen, who, to a miracle, bear hunger, and thirſt, and cold, and confinement, and the chains and laſh of their keeper, whilſt all the while they ſupport themſelves by the

the imagination that they are generals of armies, prophets, kings, and emperors. As to a change of mind in theſe men, who conſider infamy as honour, degradation as preferment, bondage to low tyrants as liberty, and the practical ſcorn and contumely of their upſtart maſters, as marks of reſpect and homage, I look upon it as abſolutely impracticable. Theſe madmen, to be cured, muſt firſt, like other madmen, be ſubdued. The ſound part of the community, which I believe to be large, but by no means the largeſt part, has been taken by ſurprize, and is disjointed, terrified, and diſarmed. That ſound part of the community muſt firſt be put into a better condition, before it can do any thing in the way of deliberation or perſuaſion. This muſt be an act of power, as well as of wiſdom; of power, in the hands of firm, determined patriots, who can diſtinguiſh the miſled from traitors, who will regulate the ſtate (if ſuch ſhould be their fortune) with a diſcriminating, manly, and provident mercy; men who are purged of the ſurfeit and indigeſtion of ſyſtems, if ever they have been admitted into the habit of their minds; men who will lay the foundation of a real reform, in effacing every veſtige of that philoſophy which pretends to have made diſcoveries in the *terra auſtralis* of morality; men who will fix the ſtate upon theſe baſes of morals and politics, which are our old, and immemorial, and, I hope, will be our eternal poſſeſſion.

This power, to ſuch men, muſt come from *without*. It may be given to you in pity; for ſurely no nation ever called ſo pathetically on the compaſſion of all its neighbours. It may be given by thoſe neighbours on motives of ſafety to themſelves. Never ſhall I think any country in Europe to be ſecure, whilſt there is eſtabliſhed, in the very centre of it, a ſtate (if ſo it may be called) founded on principles of anarchy, and which is, in reality, a college of armed fanatics, for the propagation of the principles of aſſaſſination, robbery,

rebellion, fraud, faction, oppreſſion, and impiety. *Mahomet*, hid, as for a time he was, in the bottom of the ſands of Arabia, had his ſpirit and character been diſcovered, would have been an object of precaution to provident minds. What if he had erected his fanatic ſtandard for the deſtruction of the Chriſtian religion in *luce Aſiæ*, in the midſt of the then noon-day ſplendour of the then civilized world? The princes of Europe, in the beginning of this century, did well not to ſuffer the monarchy of France to ſwallow up the others. They ought not now, in my opinion, to ſuffer all the monarchies and commonwealths to be ſwallowed up in the gulph of this polluted anarchy. They may be tolerably ſafe at preſent, becauſe the comparative power of France for the preſent is little. But times and occaſions make dangers. Inteſtine troubles may ariſe in other countries. There is a power always on the watch, qualified and diſpoſed to profit of every conjuncture, to eſtabliſh its own principles and modes of miſchief, wherever it can hope for ſucceſs. What mercy would theſe uſurpers have on other ſovereigns, and on other nations, when they treat their own king with ſuch unparalleled indignities, and ſo cruelly oppreſs their own countrymen?

The king of Pruſſia, in concurrence with us, nobly interfered to ſave Holland from confuſion. The ſame power, joined with the reſcued Holland and with Great Britain, has put the emperor in the poſſeſſion of the Netherlands; and ſecured, under that prince, from all arbitrary innovation, the antient, hereditary conſtitution of thoſe provinces. The chamber of Wetzler has reſtored the Biſhop of Leige, unjuſtly diſpoſſeſſed by the rebellion of his ſubjects. The king of Pruſſia was bound by no treaty, nor alliance of blood, nor had any particular reaſons for thinking the emperor's government would be more miſchievous or more oppreſſive to human

human nature than that of the Turk; yet on mere motives of policy that prince has interpoſed with the threat of all his force, to ſnatch even the Turk from the pounces of the imperial eagle. If this is done in favour of a barbarous nation, with a barbarous neglect of police, fatal to the human race, in favour of a nation, by principle in eternal enmity with the Chriſtian name; a nation which will not ſo much as give the ſalutation of peace (Salam) to any of us; nor make any pact with any Chriſtian nation beyond a truce;—if this be done in favour of the Turk, ſhall it be thought either impolitic, or unjuſt, or uncharitable, to employ the ſame power, to reſcue from captivity a virtuous monarch (by the courteſy of Europe conſidered as Moſt Chriſtian) who, after an intermiſſion of 175 years, had called together the ſtates of his kingdom, to reform abuſes, to eſtabliſh a free government, and to ſtrengthen his throne; a monarch, who at the very outſet, without force, even without ſollicitation, had given to his people ſuch a Magna Charta of privileges, as never was given by any king to any ſubjects?—Is it to be tamely borne by kings who love their ſubjects, or by ſubjects who love their kings, that this monarch, in the midſt of theſe gracious acts, was inſolently and cruelly torn from his palace, by a gang of traitors and aſſaſſins, and kept in cloſe priſon to this very hour, whilſt his royal name and ſacred character were uſed for the total ruin of thoſe whom the laws had appointed him to protect?

The only offence of this unhappy monarch towards his people, was his attempt, under a monarchy, to give them a free conſtitution. For this, by an example hitherto unheard of in the world, he has been depoſed. It might well diſgrace ſovereigns to take part with a depoſed tyrant. It would ſuppoſe in them a vicious ſympathy. But not to make a common cauſe with a juſt prince, dethroned by

traitors and rebels, who proſcribe, plunder, confiſcate, and in every way cruelly oppreſs their fellow citizens, in my opinion is to forget what is due to the honour, and to the rights of all virtuous and legal government.

I think the king of France to be as much an object both of policy and compaſſion as the Grand Seignor or his ſtates. I do not conceive, that the total annihilation of France (if that could be effected) is a deſirable thing to Europe; or even to this its rival nation. Provident patriots did not think it good for Rome, that even Carthage ſhould be quite deſtroyed; and he was a wiſe Greek, wiſe for the general Grecian intereſts, as well as a brave Lacedemonian enemy, and generous conqueror, who did not wiſh, by the deſtruction of Athens, to pluck out the other eye of Greece.

However, Sir, what I have here ſaid of the interference of foreign princes is only the opinion of a private individual; who is neither the repreſentative of any ſtate, nor the organ of any party; but who thinks himſelf bound to expreſs his own ſentiments with freedom and energy in a criſis of ſuch importance to the whole human race.

I am not apprehenſive that in ſpeaking freely on the ſubject of the king and queen of France, I ſhall accelerate (as you fear) the execution of traiterous deſigns againſt them. You are of opinion, Sir, that the uſurpers may, and that they will, gladly lay hold of any pretext to throw off the very name of a king:—aſſuredly I do not wiſh ill to your king; but better for him not to live (he does not reign) than to live the paſſive inſtrument of tyranny and uſurpation.

I certainly meant to ſhew, to the beſt of my power, that the exiſtence of ſuch an executive officer, in ſuch a ſyſtem of republic as theirs, is abſurd in the higheſt degree. But in demonſtrating this—to *them*, at leaſt, I can have made no diſcovery. They only held out the royal name to catch

thoſe

thoſe Frenchmen to whom the name of king is ſtill venerable. They calculate the duration of that ſentiment; and when they find it nearly expiring, they will not trouble themſelves with excuſes for extinguiſhing the name, as they have the thing. They uſed it as a ſort of navel-ſtring to nouriſh their unnatural offſpring from the bowels of royalty itſelf. Now that the monſter can purvey for its own ſubſiſtence, it will only carry the mark about it, as a token of its having torn the womb it came from. Tyrants ſeldom want pretexts. Fraud is the ready miniſter of injuſtice; and whilſt the currency of falſe pretence and ſophiſtic reaſoning was expedient to their deſigns, they were under no neceſſity of drawing upon me to furniſh them with that coin. But pretexts and ſophiſms have had their day; and have done their work. The uſurpation no longer ſeeks plauſibility. It truſts to power.

Nothing that I can ſay, or that you can ſay, will haſten them by a ſingle hour, in the execution of a deſign which they have long ſince entertained. In ſpite of their ſolemn declarations, their ſoothing addreſſes, and the multiplied oaths which they have taken, and forced others to take, they will aſſaſſinate the king when his name will no longer be neceſſary to their deſigns; but not a moment ſooner. They will probably firſt aſſaſſinate the queen, whenever the renewed menace of ſuch an aſſaſſination loſes its effect upon the anxious mind of an affectionate huſband. At preſent, the advantage which they derive from the daily threats againſt her life, is her only ſecurity for preſerving it. They keep their ſovereign alive for the purpoſe of exhibiting him, like ſome wild beaſt at a fair; as if they had a Bajazet in a cage. They chooſe to make monarchy contemptible by expoſing it to deriſion, in the perſon of the moſt benevolent of their kings.

In

In my opinion, their inſolence appears more odious even than their crimes. The horrors of the 5th and 6th of October were leſs deteſtable than the feſtival of the 14th of July. There are ſituations (God forbid I ſhould think that of the 5th and 6th of October one of them) in which the beſt men may be confounded with the worſt, and in the darkneſs and confuſion, in the preſs and medley of ſuch extremities, it may not be ſo eaſy to diſcriminate the one from the other. The neceſſities created, even by ill deſigns, have their excuſe. They may be forgotten by others, when the guilty themſelves do not chooſe to cheriſh their recollection, and by ruminating their offences, nouriſh themſelves through the example of their paſt, to the perpetration of future crimes. It is in the relaxation of ſecurity, it is in the expanſion of proſperity, it is in the hour of dilatation of the heart, and of its ſoftening into feſtivity and pleaſure, that the real character of men is diſcerned. If there is any good in them, it appears then or never. Even wolves and tygers, when gorged with their prey, are ſafe and gentle. It is at ſuch times that noble minds give all the reins to their good-nature. They indulge their genius even to intemperance, in kindneſs to the afflicted, in generoſity to the conquered; forbearing inſults, forgiving injuries, overpaying benefits. Full of dignity themſelves, they reſpect dignity in all, but they feel it ſacred in the unhappy. But it is then, and baſking in the ſunſhine of unmerited fortune, that low, ſordid, ungenerous, and reptile ſouls ſwell with their hoarded poiſons; it is then that they diſplay their odious ſplendour, and ſhine out in the full luſtre of their native villainy and baſeneſs. It is in that ſeaſon that no man of ſenſe or honour can be miſtaken for one of them. It was in ſuch a ſeaſon, for them of political eaſe and ſecurity, though their people were but juſt emerged from actual famine, and were ready to be plunged into a gulph

gulph of penury and beggary, that your philoſophic lords choſe, with an oſtentatious pomp and luxury, to feaſt an incredible number of idle and thoughtleſs people collected with art and pains, from all quarters of the world. They conſtructed a vaſt amphitheatre in which they raiſed a ſpecies of * pillory. On this pillory they ſet their lawful king and queen, with an inſulting figure over their heads. There they expoſed theſe objects of pity and reſpect to all good minds, to the deriſion of an unthinking and unprincipled multitude, degenerated even from the verſatile tenderneſs which marks the irregular and capricious feelings of the populace. That their cruel inſult might have nothing wanting to complete it, they choſe the anniverſary of that day in which they expoſed the life of their prince to the moſt imminent dangers, and the vileſt indignities, juſt following the inſtant when the aſſaſſins, whom they had hired without owning, firſt openly took up arms againſt their king, corrupted his guards, ſurprized his caſtle, butchered ſome of the poor invalids of his garriſon, murdered his governor, and, like wild beaſts, tore to pieces the chief magiſtrate of his capital city, on account of his fidelity to his ſervice.

Till the juſtice of the world is awakened, ſuch as theſe will go on, without admonition, and without provocation, to every extremity. Thoſe who have made the exhibition of the 14th of July, are capable of every evil. They do not commit crimes for their deſigns; but they form deſigns that they may commit crimes. It is not their neceſſity, but their nature, that impels them. They are modern philoſophers, which when your ſay of them, you expreſs every thing that is ignoble, ſavage, and hard-hearted.

* The pillory (carcan) in England is generally made very high, like that raiſed for expoſing the king of France.

Beſides

Beſides the ſure tokens which are given by the ſpirit of their particular arrangements, there are ſome characteriſtic lineaments in the general policy of your tumultuous deſpotiſm, which, in my opinion, indicate beyond a doubt, that no revolution whatſoever *in their diſpoſition* is to be expected. I mean their ſcheme of educating the riſing generation, the principles which they intend to inſtil, and the ſympathies which they wiſh to form in the mind, at the ſeaſon in which it is the moſt ſuſceptible. Inſtead of forming their young minds to that docility, to that modeſty, which are the grace and charm of youth, to an admiration of famous examples, and to an averſeneſs to any thing which approaches to pride, petulance, and ſelf-conceit, (diſtempers to which that time of life is of itſelf ſufficiently liable) they artificially foment theſe evil diſpoſitions, and even form them into ſprings of action. Nothing ought to be more weighed than the nature of books recommended by public authority. So recommended, they ſoon form the character of the age. Uncertain indeed is the efficacy, limited indeed is the extent of a virtuous inſtitution. But if education takes in *vice* as any part of its ſyſtem, there is no doubt but that it will operate with abundant energy, and to an extent indefinite. The magiſtrate, who in favour of freedom thinks himſelf obliged to ſuffer all ſorts of publications, is under a ſtricter duty than any other, well to conſider what ſort of writers he ſhall authorize; and ſhall recommend, by the ſtrongeſt of all ſanctions, that is, by public honours and rewards. He ought to be cautious how he recommends authors of mixed or ambiguous morality. He ought to be fearful of putting into the hands of youth writers indulgent to the peculiarities of their own complexion, leſt they ſhould teach the humours of the profeſſor, rather than the principles of the ſcience. He ought, above all, to be cautious in recommending any writer

who

who has carried marks of a deranged underſtanding; for where there is no ſound reaſon, there can be no real virtue; and madneſs is ever vitious and malignant.

The national aſſembly proceeds on maxims the very reverſe of theſe. The aſſembly recommends to its youth a ſtudy of the bold experimenters in morality. Every body knows that there is a great diſpute amongſt their leaders, which of them is the beſt reſemblance to Rouſſeau. In truth, they all reſemble him. His blood they transfuſe into their minds and into their manners. Him they ſtudy; him they meditate; him they turn over in all the time they can ſpare from the laborious miſchief of the day, or the debauches of the night. Rouſſeau is their canon of holy writ; in his life he is their canon of *Polycletus*; he is their ſtandard figure of perfection. To this man and this writer, as a pattern to authors and to Frenchmen, the founderies of Paris are now running for ſtatues, with the kettles of their poor and the bells of their churches. If an author had written like a great genius on geometry, though his practical and ſpeculative morals were vitious in the extreme, it might appear that in voting the ſtatue, they honoured only the geometrician. But Rouſſeau is a moraliſt, or he is nothing. It is impoſſible, therefore, putting the circumſtances together, to miſtake their deſign in chooſing the author, with whom they have begun to recommend a courſe of ſtudies.

Their great problem is to find a ſubſtitute for all the principles which hitherto have been employed to regulate the human will and action. They find diſpoſitions in the mind, of ſuch force and quality, as may fit men, far better than the old morality, for the purpoſes of ſuch a ſtate as theirs, and may go much further in ſupporting their power, and deſtroying their enemies. They have therefore choſen a ſelfiſh, flattering, ſeductive, oſtentatious vice, in the place of

plain duty. True humility, the baſis of the Chriſtian ſyſtem, is the low, but deep and firm foundation of all real virtue. But this, as very painful in the practice, and little impoſing in the appearance, they have totally diſcarded. Their object is to merge all natural and all ſocial ſentiment in inordinate vanity. In a ſmall degree, and converſant in little things, vanity is of little moment. When full grown, it is the worſt of vices, and the occaſional mimic of them all. It makes the whole man falſe. It leaves nothing ſincere or truſt-worthy about him. His beſt qualities are poiſoned and perverted by it, and operate exactly as the worſt. When your lords had many writers as immoral as the object of their ſtatue (ſuch as Voltaire and others) they choſe Rouſſeau; becauſe in him that peculiar vice which they wiſhed to erect into a ruling virtue, was by far the moſt conſpicuous.

We have had the great profeſſor and founder of *the philoſophy of vanity* in England. As I had good opportunities of knowing his proceedings almoſt from day to day, he left no doubt in my mind, that he entertained no principle either to influence his heart, or to guide his underſtanding, but *vanity*. With this vice he was poſſeſſed to a degree little ſhort of madneſs. It is from the ſame deranged eccentric vanity, that this, the inſane *Socrates* of the national aſſembly, was impelled to publiſh a mad confeſſion of his mad faults, and to attempt a new ſort of glory, from bringing hardily to light the obſcure and vulgar vices which we know may ſometimes be blended with eminent talents. He has not obſerved on the nature of vanity, who does not know that it is omnivorous; that it has no choice in its food; that it is fond to talk even of its own faults and vices, as what will excite ſurprize and draw attention, and what will paſs at worſt for openneſs and candour. It was this abuſe and perverſion,

verſion, which vanity makes even of hypocriſy, which has driven Rouſſeau to record a life not ſo much as chequered, or ſpotted here and there, with virtues, or even diſtinguiſhed by a ſingle good action. It is ſuch a life he chooſes to offer to the attention of mankind. It is ſuch a life, that with a wild defiance, he flings in the face of his Creator, whom he acknowledges only to brave. Your aſſembly, knowing how much more powerful example is found than precept, has choſen this man (by his own account without a ſingle virtue) for a model. To him they erect their firſt ſtatue. From him they commence their ſeries of honours and diſtinctions.

It is that new-invented virtue which your maſters canonize, that led their moral hero conſtantly to exhauſt the ſtores of his powerful rhetoric in the expreſſion of univerſal benevolence; whilſt his heart was incapable of harbouring one ſpark of common parental affection. Benevolence to the whole ſpecies, and want of feeling for every individual with whom the profeſſors come in contact, form the character of the new philoſophy. Setting up for an unſocial independence, this their hero of vanity refuſes the juſt price of common labour, as well as the tribute which opulence owes to genius, and which, when paid, honours the giver and the receiver; and then he pleads his beggary as an excuſe for his crimes. He melts with tenderneſs for thoſe only who touch him by the remoteſt relation, and then, without one natural pang, caſts away, as a ſort of offal and excrement, the ſpawn of his diſguſtful amours, and ſends his children to the hoſpital of foundlings. The bear loves, licks, and forms her young; but bears are not philoſophers. Vanity, however, finds its account in reverſing the train of our natural feelings. Thouſands admire the ſentimental

writer; the affectionate father is hardly known in his pariſh.

Under this philoſophic inſtructor in the *ethics of vanity*, they have attempted in France a regeneration of the moral conſtitution of man. Stateſmen, like your preſent rulers, exiſt by every thing which is ſpurious, fictitious, and falſe; by every thing which takes the man from his houſe, and ſets him on a ſtage, which makes him up an artificial creature, with painted theatric ſentiments, fit to be ſeen by the glare of candle-light, and formed to be contemplated at a due diſtance. Vanity is too apt to prevail in all of us, and in all countries. To the improvement of Frenchmen it ſeems not abſolutely neceſſary that it ſhould be taught upon ſyſtem. But it is plain that the preſent rebellion was its legitimate offspring, and it is piouſly fed by that rebellion, with a daily dole.

If the ſyſtem of inſtitution, recommended by the aſſembly, is falſe and theatric, it is becauſe their ſyſtem of government is of the ſame character. To that, and to that alone, it is ſtrictly conformable. To underſtand either, we muſt connect the morals with the politics of the legiſlators. Your practical philoſophers, ſyſtematic in every thing, have wiſely began at the ſource. As the relation between parents and children is the firſt among the elements of vulgar, natural morality *, they erect ſtatues to a wild, ferocious, low-minded, hard-hearted father, of fine general feelings; a lover of his kind, but a hater of his kindred. Your maſters reject the duties of this vulgar relation, as contrary to li-

* Filiola tua te delectari lætor et probari tibi τοργην φυσικην eſſe π᾽ πρὸς τα τεκνα: etenim, ſi hæc non eſt, nulla poteſt homini eſſe ad hominem naturæ adjunctio: qua ſublata vitæ ſocietas tolletur. Valete Patron [Rouſſeau] et tui condiſcipuli! [L'Aſſemblée Nationale.]
Cic. Ep. ad Atticum.

berty;

berty; as not founded in the ſocial compact; and not binding according to the rights of men; becauſe the relation is not, of courſe, the reſult of *free election*; never ſo on the ſide of the children, not always on the part of the parents.

The next relation which they regenerate by their ſtatues to Rouſſeau, is that which is next in ſanctity to that of a father. They differ from thoſe old-faſhioned thinkers, who conſidered pedagogues as ſober and venerable characters, and allied to the parental. The moraliſts of the dark times, *preceptorem ſancti voluere parentis eſſe loco.* In this age of light, they teach the people, that preceptors ought to be in the place of gallants. They ſyſtematically corrupt a very corruptible race, (for ſome time a growing nuiſance amongſt you) a ſet of pert, petulant, literators, to whom, inſtead of their proper, but ſevere, unoſtentatious duties, they aſſign the brilliant part of men of wit and pleaſure, of gay, young, military ſparks, and danglers at toilets. They call on the riſing generation in France, to take a ſympathy in the adventures and fortunes, and they endeavour to engage their ſenſibility on the ſide of pedagogues, who betray the moſt awful family truſts, and vitiate their female pupils. They teach the people, that the debauchers of virgins, almoſt in the arms of their parents, may be ſafe inmates in their houſe, and even fit guardians of the honour of thoſe huſbands who ſucceed legally to the office which the young literators had pre-occupied, without aſking leave of law or conſcience.

Thus they diſpoſe of all the family relations of parents and children, huſbands and wives. Through this ſame inſtructor, by whom they corrupt the morals, they corrupt the taſte. Taſte and elegance, though they are reckoned only among the ſmaller and ſecondary morals, yet are of no mean importance in the regulation of life. A moral taſte is

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not of force to turn vice into virtue; but it recommends virtue with ſomething like the blandiſhments of pleaſure; and it infinitely abates the evils of vice. Rouſſeau, a writer of great force and vivacity, is totally deſtitute of taſte in any ſenſe of the word. Your maſters, who are his ſcholars, conceive that all refinement has an ariſtocratic character. The laſt age had exhauſted all its powers in giving a grace and nobleneſs to our natural appetites, and in raiſing them into higher claſs and order than ſeemed juſtly to belong to them. Through Rouſſeau, your maſters are reſolved to deſtroy theſe ariſtocratic prejudices. The paſſion called love, has ſo general and powerful an influence; it makes ſo much of the entertainment, and indeed ſo much the occupation of that part of life which decides the character for ever, that the mode and the principles on which it engages the ſympathy, and ſtrikes the imagination, become of the utmoſt importance to the morals and manners of every ſociety. Your rulers were well aware of this; and in their ſyſtem of changing your manners to accommodate them to their politics, they found nothing ſo convenient as Rouſſeau. Through him they teach men to love after the faſhion of philoſophers; that is, they teach to men, to Frenchmen, a love without gallantry; a love without any thing of that fine flower of youthfulneſs and gentility, which places it, if not among the virtues, among the ornaments of life. Inſtead of this paſſion, naturally allied to grace and manners, they infuſe into their youth an unfaſhioned, indelicate, ſour, gloomy, ferocious medley of pedantry and lewdneſs; of metaphyſical ſpeculations, blended with the coarſeſt ſenſuality. Such is the general morality of the paſſions to be found in their famous philoſopher, in his famous work of philoſophic gallantry, the *Nouvelle Eloiſe*.

When the fence from the gallantry of preceptors is broken

down, and your families are no longer protected by decent pride, and ſalutary domeſtic prejudice, there is but one ſtep to a frightful corruption. The rulers in the national aſſembly are in good hopes that the females of the firſt families in France may become an eaſy prey to dancing-maſters, fidlers, pattern-drawers, friſeurs, and valets de chambre, and other active citizens of that deſcription, who having the entry into your houſes, and being half domeſticated by their ſituation, may be blended with you by regular and irregular relations. By a law, they have made theſe people your equals. By adopting the ſentiments of Rouſſeau, they have made them your rivals. In this manner, theſe great legiſlators complete their plan of levelling, and eſtabliſh their rights of men on a ſure foundation.

I am certain that the writings of Rouſſeau lead directly to this kind of ſhameful evil. I have often wondered how he comes to be ſo much more admired and followed on the continent than he is here. Perhaps a ſecret charm in the language may have its ſhare in this extraordinary difference. We certainly perceive, and to a degree we feel, in this writer, a ſtyle glowing, animated, enthuſiaſtic; at the ſame time that we find it lax, diffuſe, and not in the beſt taſte of compoſition; all the members of the piece being pretty equally laboured and expanded, without any due ſelection or ſubordination of parts. He is generally too much on the ſtretch, and his manner has little variety. We cannot reſt upon any of his works, though they contain obſervations which occaſionally diſcover a conſiderable inſight into human nature. But his doctrines, on the whole, are ſo inapplicable to real life and manners, that we never dream of drawing from them any rule for laws or conduct, or for fortifying or illuſtrating any thing by a reference to his opinions. They have with us the fate of older paradoxes,

Cum ventum ad verum *eſt* ſenſus moreſque *repugnant,*
Atque ipſa utilitas juſti prope mater et æqui.

Perhaps bold ſpeculations are more acceptable, becauſe more new to you than to us, who have been long ſince ſatiated with them. We continue, as in the two laſt ages, to read more generally, than I believe is now done on the continent, the authors of ſound antiquity. Theſe occupy our minds. They give us another taſte and turn; and will not ſuffer us to be more than tranſiently amuſed with paradoxical morality. It is not that I conſider this writer as wholly deſtitute of juſt notions. Amongſt his irregularities, it muſt be reckoned, that he is ſometimes moral, and moral in a very ſublime ſtrain. But the *general ſpirit and tendency* of his works is miſchievous; and the more miſchievous for this mixture: For, perfect depravity of ſentiment is not reconcileable with eloquence; and the mind (though corruptible, not complexionally vitious) would reject and throw off with diſguſt, a leſſon of pure and unmixed evil. Theſe writers make even virtue a pander to vice.

However, I leſs conſider the author, than the ſyſtem of the aſſembly in perverting morality, through his means. This I confeſs makes me nearly deſpair of any attempt upon the minds of their followers, through reaſon, honour, or conſcience. The great object of your tyrants, is to deſtroy the gentlemen of France; and for that purpoſe they deſtroy, to the beſt of their power, all the effect of thoſe relations which may render conſiderable men powerful or even ſafe. To deſtroy that order, they vitiate the whole community. That no means may exiſt of confederating againſt their tyranny, by the falſe ſympathies of this Nouvelle Eloiſe, they endeavour to ſubvert thoſe principles of domeſtic truſt and fidelity, which form the diſcipline of ſocial life. They pro-

pagate principles by which every ſervant may think it, if not his duty, at leaſt his privilege, to betray his maſter. By theſe principles, every conſiderable father of a family loſes the ſanctuary of his houſe. *Debet ſua cuique domus eſſe perfugium tutiſſimum*, ſays the law, which your legiſlators have taken ſo much pains firſt to decry, then to repeal. They deſtroy all the tranquillity and ſecurity of domeſtic life; turning the aſylum of the houſe into a gloomy priſon, where the father of the family muſt drag out a miſerable exiſtence, endangered in proportion to the apparent means of his ſafety; where he is worſe than ſolitary in a croud of domeſtics, and more apprehenſive from his ſervants and inmates, than from the hired blood-thirſty mob without doors, who are ready to pull him to the lanterne.

It is thus, and for the ſame end, that they endeavour to deſtroy that tribunal of conſcience which exiſts independently of edicts and decrees. Your deſpots govern by terror. They know, that he who fears God fears nothing elſe; and therefore they eradicate from the mind, through their Voltaire, their Helvetius, and the reſt of that infamous gang, that only ſort of fear which generates true courage. Their object is, that their fellow citizens may be under the dominion of no awe, but that of their committee of reſearch, and of their lanterne.

Having found the advantage of aſſaſſination in the formation of their tyranny, it is the grand reſource in which they truſt for the ſupport of it. Whoever oppoſes any of their proceedings, or is ſuſpected of a deſign to oppoſe them, is to anſwer it with his life, or the lives of his wife and children. This infamous, cruel, and cowardly practice of aſſaſſination, they have the impudence to call *merciful*. They boaſt that they have operated their uſurpation rather by terror than by force; and that a few ſeaſonable murders have prevented

the bloodſhed of many battles. There is no doubt they will extend theſe acts of mercy whenever they ſee an occaſion. Dreadful, however, will be the conſequences of their attempt to avoid the evils of war, by the merciful policy of murder. If, by effectual puniſhment of the guilty, they do not wholly diſavow that practice, and the threat of it too, as any part of their policy; if ever a foreign prince enters into France, he muſt enter it as into a country of aſſaſſins. The mode of civilized war will not be practiſed: nor are the French who act on the preſent ſyſtem entitled to expect it. They, whoſe known policy is to aſſaſſinate every citizen whom they ſuſpect to be diſcontented by their tyranny, and to corrupt the ſoldiery of every open enemy, muſt look for no modified hoſtility. All war, which is not battle, will be military execution. This will beget acts of retaliation from you; and every retaliation will beget a new revenge. The hell-hounds of war, on all ſides, will be uncoupled and unmuzzled. The new ſchool of murder and barbariſm, ſet up in Paris, having deſtroyed (ſo far as in it lies) all the other manners and principles which have hitherto civilized Europe, will deſtroy alſo the mode of civilized war, which, more than any thing elſe, has diſtinguiſhed the Chriſtian world. Such is the approaching golden age, which the * Virgil of your aſſembly has ſung to his Pollios!

In ſuch a ſituation of your political, your civil, and your ſocial morals and manners, how can you be hurt by the freedom of any diſcuſſion? Caution is for thoſe who have ſomething to loſe. What I have ſaid to juſtify myſelf in not apprehending any ill conſequence from a free diſcuſſion of the abſurd conſequences which flow from the relation of the lawful king to the uſurped conſtitution, will apply to my vindication with regard to the expoſure I have made of the

* Mirabeau's ſpeech concerning univerſal peace.

ſtate

ſtate of the army under the ſame ſophiſtic uſurpation. The preſent tyrants want no arguments to prove, what they muſt daily feel, that no good army can exiſt on their principles. They are in no want of a monitor to ſuggeſt to them the policy of getting rid of the army, as well as of the king, whenever they are in a condition to effect that meaſure. What hopes may be entertained of your army for the reſtoration of your liberties, I know not. At preſent, yielding obedience to the pretended orders of a king, who, they are perfectly appriſed, has no will, and who never can iſſue a mandate which is not intended, in the firſt operation, or in its certain conſequences, for his own deſtruction, your army ſeems to make one of the principal links in the chain of that ſervitude of anarchy, by which a cruel uſurpation holds an undone people at once in bondage and confuſion.

You aſk me what I think of the conduct of general Monk. How this affects your caſe, I cannot tell. I doubt whether you poſſeſs, in France, any perſons of a capacity to ſerve the French monarchy in the ſame manner in which Monk ſerved the monarchy of England. The army which Monk commanded had been formed by Cromwell to a perfection of diſcipline which perhaps has never been exceeded. That army was beſides of an excellent compoſition. The ſoldiers were men of extraordinary piety after their mode, of the greateſt regularity, and even ſeverity of manners; brave in the field, but modeſt, quiet and orderly, in their quarters; men who abhorred the idea of aſſaſſinating their officers or any other perſons; and who (they at leaſt who ſerved in this iſland) were firmly attached to thoſe generals, by whom they were well treated and ably commanded. Such an army, once gained, might be depended on. I doubt much, if you could now find a Monk, whether a Monk could find in France, ſuch an army.

I certainly agree with you, that in all probability we owe our whole conſtitution to the reſtoration of the Engliſh monarchy. The ſtate of things from which Monk relieved England, was however by no means, at that time, ſo deplorable in any ſenſe, as yours is now, and under the preſent ſway is likely to continue. Cromwell had delivered England from anarchy. His government, though military and deſpotic, had been regular and orderly. Under the iron, and under the yoke, the ſoil yielded its produce. After his death, the evils of anarchy were rather dreaded than felt. Every man was yet ſafe in his houſe and in his property. But it muſt be admitted, that Monk freed this nation from great and juſt apprehenſions both of future anarchy and of probable tyranny in ſome form or other. The king whom he gave us was indeed the very reverſe of your benignant ſovereign, who in reward for his attempt to beſtow liberty on his ſubjects, languiſhes himſelf in priſon. The perſon given to us by Monk was a man without any ſenſe of his duty as a prince; without any regard to the dignity of his crown; without any love to his people; diſſolute, falſe, venal, and deſtitute of any poſitive good quality whatſoever, except a pleaſant temper, and the manners of a gentleman. Yet the reſtoration of our monarchy, even in the perſon of ſuch a prince, was every thing to us; for without monarchy in England, moſt certainly we never can enjoy either peace or liberty. It was under this conviction that the very firſt regular ſtep which we took on the revolution of 1688, was to fill the throne with a real king; and even before it could be done in due form, the chiefs of the nation did not attempt themſelves to exerciſe authority ſo much as by *interim*. They inſtantly requeſted the prince of Orange to take the government on himſelf. The throne was not effectively vacant for an hour.

Your fundamental laws, as well as ours, ſuppoſe a monarchy. Your zeal, Sir, in ſtanding ſo firmly for it as you have done, ſhews not only a ſacred reſpect for your honour and fidelity, but a well-informed attachment to the real welfare and true liberties of your country. I have expreſſed myſelf ill, if I have given you cauſe to imagine, that I prefer the conduct of thoſe who have retired from this warfare to your behaviour, who, with a courage and conſtancy almoſt ſupernatural, have ſtruggled againſt tyranny, and kept the field to the laſt. You ſee I have corrected the exceptionable part in the edition which I now ſend you. Indeed in ſuch terrible extremities as yours, it is not eaſy to ſay, in a political view, what line of conduct is the moſt adviſeable. In that ſtate of things, I cannot bring myſelf ſeverely to condemn perſons who are wholly unable to bear ſo much as the ſight of thoſe men in the throne of legiſlation, who are only fit to be the objects of criminal juſtice. If fatigue, if diſguſt, if unſurmountable nauſea, drive them away from ſuch ſpectacles, *ubi miſeriarum pars non minima erat, videre et aſpici*, I cannot blame them. He muſt have an heart of adamant who could hear a ſet of traitors puffed up with unexpected and undeſerved power, obtained by an ignoble, unmanly, and perfidious rebellion, treating their honeſt fellow citizens as *rebels*, becauſe they refuſed to bind themſelves through their conſcience, againſt the dictates of conſcience itſelf, and had declined to ſwear an active compliance with their own ruin. How could a man of common fleſh and blood endure, that thoſe, who but the other day had ſkulked unobſerved in their antichambers, ſcornfully inſulting men, illuſtrious in their rank, ſacred in their function, and venerable in their character, now in decline of life, and ſwimming on the wrecks of their fortunes, that thoſe miſcreants ſhould tell ſuch men ſcornfully and outrageouſly, after they had

robbed

robbed them of all their property, that it is more than enough if they are allowed what will keep them from abſolute famine, and that for the reſt, they muſt let their grey hairs fall over the plough, to make out a ſcanty ſubſiſtence with the labour of their hands! Laſt, and worſt, who could endure to hear this unnatural, inſolent, and ſavage deſpotiſm called liberty? If, at this diſtance, ſitting quietly by my fire, I cannot read their decrees and ſpeeches without indignation, ſhall I condemn thoſe who have fled from the actual ſight and hearing of all theſe horrors? No, no! mankind has no title to demand that we ſhould be ſlaves to their guilt and inſolence; or that we ſhould ſerve them in ſpite of themſelves. Minds, ſore with the poignant ſenſe of inſulted virtue, filled with high diſdain againſt the pride of triumphant baſeneſs, often have it not in their choice to ſtand their ground. Their complexion (which might defy the rack) cannot go through ſuch a trial. Something very high muſt fortify men to that proof. But when I am driven to compariſon, ſurely I cannot heſitate for a moment to prefer to ſuch men as are common, thoſe heroes, who in the midſt of deſpair perform all the taſks of hope; who ſubdue their feelings to their duties; who, in the cauſe of humanity, liberty, and honour, abandon all the ſatisfactions of life, and every day incur a freſh riſque of life itſelf. Do me the juſtice to believe that I never can prefer any faſtidious virtue (virtue ſtill) to the unconquered perſeverance, to the affectionate patience of thoſe who watch day and night, by the bed-ſide of their delirious country, who, for their love to that dear and venerable name, bear all the diſguſts, and all the buffets they receive from their frantic mother. Sir, I do look on you as true martyrs; I regard you as ſoldiers who act far more in the ſpirit of our Commander in chief, and the Captain of our ſalvation, than thoſe who have left you;

though I muſt firſt bolt myſelf very thoroughly, and know that I could do better, before I can cenſure them. I aſſure you, Sir, that, when I conſider your unconquerable fidelity to your ſovereign, and to your country, the courage, fortitude, magnanimity, and long-ſuffering of yourſelf, and the Abbé Maury, and of Mr. Cazales, and of many worthy perſons of all orders, in your aſſembly, I forget, in the luſtre of theſe great qualities, that on your ſide has been diſplayed an eloquence ſo rational, manly, and convincing, that no time or country, perhaps, has ever excelled. But your talents diſappear in my admiration of your virtues.

As to Mr. Mounier and Mr. Lally, I have always wiſhed to do juſtice to their parts, and their eloquence, and the general purity of their motives. Indeed I ſaw very well from the beginning, the miſchiefs which, with all theſe talents and good intentions, they would do their country, through their confidence in ſyſtems. But their diſtemper was an epidemic malady. They were young and inexperienced; and when will young and inexperienced men learn caution and diſtruſt of themſelves? And when will men, young or old, if ſuddenly raiſed to far higher power than that which abſolute kings and emperors commonly enjoy, learn any thing like moderation? Monarchs in general reſpect ſome ſettled order of things, which they find it difficult to move from its baſis, and to which they are obliged to conform, even when there are no poſitive limitations to their power. Theſe gentlemen conceived that they were choſen to new model the ſtate, and even the whole order of civil ſociety itſelf. No wonder that *they* entertained dangerous viſions, when the king's miniſters, truſtees for the ſacred depoſit of the monarchy, were ſo infected with the contagion of project and ſyſtem (I can hardly think it black premeditated treachery) that they publicly advertiſed for plans and ſchemes of government, as

if

if they were to provide for the rebuilding of an hoſpital that had been burned down. What was this, but to unchain the fury of raſh ſpeculation amongſt a people, of itſelf but too apt to be guided by a heated imagination, and a wild ſpirit of adventure?

The fault of Mr. Mounier and Mr. Lally was very great; but it was very general. If thoſe gentlemen ſtopped when they came to the brink of the gulf of guilt and public miſery, that yawned before them in the abyſs of theſe dark and bottomleſs ſpeculations, I forgive their firſt error; in that they were involved with many. Their repentance was their own.

They who conſider Mounier and Lally as deſerters, muſt regard themſelves as murderers and as traitors: for from what elſe than murder and treaſon did they deſert? For my part, I honour them for not having carried miſtake into crime. If, indeed, I thought that they were not cured by experience; that they were not made ſenſible that thoſe who would reform a ſtate, ought to aſſume ſome actual conſtitution of government which is to be reformed; if they are not at length ſatisfied that it is become a neceſſary preliminary to liberty in France, to commence by the re-eſtabliſhment of order and property of *every* kind, through the re-eſtabliſhment of their monarchy, of every one of the old habitual diſtinctions and claſſes of the ſtate; if they do not ſee that theſe claſſes are not to be confounded in order to be afterwards revived and ſeparated; if they are not convinced that the ſcheme of parochial and club governments takes up the ſtate at the wrong end, and is a low and ſenſeleſs contrivance (as making the ſole conſtitution of a ſupreme power) I ſhould then allow, that their early raſhneſs ought to be remembered to the laſt moment of their lives.

You gently reprehend me, becauſe in holding out the picture

ture of your diſaſtrous ſituation, I ſuggeſt no plan for a remedy. Alas! Sir, the propoſition of plans, without an attention to circumſtances, is the very cauſe of all your miſfortunes; and never ſhall you find me aggravating, by the infuſion of any ſpeculations of mine, the evils which have ariſen from the ſpeculations of others. Your malady, in this reſpect, is a diſorder of repletion. You ſeem to think, that my keeping back my poor ideas, may ariſe from an indifference to the welfare of a foreign, and ſometimes an hoſtile nation. No, Sir, I faithfully aſſure you, my reſerve is owing to no ſuch cauſes. Is this letter, ſwelled to a ſecond book, a mark of national antipathy, or even of national indifference? I ſhould act altogether in the ſpirit of the ſame caution, in a ſimilar ſtate of our own domeſtic affairs. If I were to venture any advice, in any caſe, it would be my beſt. The ſacred duty of an adviſer (one of the moſt inviolable that exiſts) would lead me, towards a real enemy, to act as if my beſt friend were the party concerned. But I dare not riſque a ſpeculation with no better view of your affairs than at preſent I can command; my caution is not from diſregard, but from ſolicitude for your welfare. It is ſuggeſted ſolely from my dread of becoming the author of inconſiderate counſel.

It is not, that as this ſtrange ſeries of actions has paſſed before my eyes, I have not indulged my mind in a great variety of political ſpeculations concerning them. But compelled by no ſuch poſitive duty as does not permit me to evade an opinion; called upon by no ruling power, without authority as I am, and without confidence, I ſhould ill anſwer my own ideas of what would become myſelf, or what would be ſerviceable to others, if I were, as a volunteer, to obtrude any project of mine upon a nation, to whoſe circumſtances I could not be ſure it might be applicable.

Permit me to ſay, that if I were as confident, as I ought to be diffident in my own looſe, general ideas, I never ſhould venture to broach them, if but at twenty leagues diſtance from the centre of your affairs. I muſt ſee with my own eyes, I muſt, in a manner, touch with my own hands, not only the fixed, but the momentary circumſtances, before I could venture to ſuggeſt any political project whatſoever. I muſt know the power and diſpoſition to accept, to execute, to perſevere. I muſt ſee all the aids, and all the obſtacles. I muſt ſee the means of correcting the plan, where correctives would be wanted. I muſt ſee the things; I muſt ſee the men. Without a concurrence and adaptation of theſe to the deſign, the very beſt ſpeculative projects might become not only uſeleſs but miſchievous. Plans muſt be made for men. We cannot think of making men, and binding nature to our deſigns. People at a diſtance muſt judge ill of men. They do not always anſwer to their reputation when you approach them. Nay, the perſpective varies, and ſhews them quite otherwiſe than you thought them. At a diſtance, if we judge uncertainly of men, we muſt judge worſe of *opportunities*, which continually vary their ſhapes and colours, and paſs away like clouds. The Eaſtern politicians never do any thing without the opinion of the aſtrologers on the *fortunate moment*. They are in the right, if they can do no better; for the opinion of fortune is ſomething towards commanding it. Stateſmen of a more judicious preſcience, look for the fortunate moment too; but they ſeek it, not in the conjunctions and oppoſitions of planets, but in the conjunctions and oppoſitions of men and things. Theſe form their almanack.

To illuſtrate the miſchief of a wiſe plan, without any attention to means and circumſtances, it is not neceſſary to go farther than to your recent hiſtory. In the condition in which

which France was found three years ago, what better ſyſtem could be propoſed, what leſs, even ſavouring of wild theory, what fitter to provide for all the exigencies, whilſt it reformed all the abuſes of government, than the convention of the ſtates general? I think nothing better could be imagined. But I have cenſured, and do ſtill preſume to cenſure your parliament of Paris, for not having ſuggeſted to the king, that this proper meaſure was of all meaſures the moſt critical and arduous; one in which the utmoſt circumſpection, and the greateſt number of precautions, were the moſt abſolutely neceſſary. The very confeſſion that a government wants either amendment in its conformation, or relief to great diſtreſs, cauſes it to loſe half its reputation, and as great a proportion of its ſtrength as depends upon that reputation. It was therefore neceſſary, firſt to put government out of danger, whilſt at its own deſire it ſuffered ſuch an operation, as a general reform at the hands of thoſe who were much more filled with a ſenſe of the diſeaſe, than provided with rational means of a cure.

It may be ſaid, that this care, and theſe precautions, were more naturally the duty of the king's miniſters, than that of the parliament. They were ſo; but every man muſt anſwer in his eſtimation for the advice he gives, when he puts the conduct of his meaſure into hands who he does not know will execute his plans according to his ideas. Three or four miniſters were not to be truſted with the being of the French monarchy, of all the orders, and of all the diſtinctions, and all the property of the kingdom. What muſt be the prudence of thoſe who could think, in the then known temper of the people of Paris, of aſſembling the ſtates at a place ſituated as Verſailles?

The parliament of Paris did worſe than to inſpire this blind confidence into the king. For, as if names were

things, they took no notice of (indeed they rather countenanced) the deviations which were manifeſt in the execution, from the true antient principles of the plan which they recommended. Theſe deviations (as guardians of the antient laws, uſages, and conſtitution of the kingdom) the parliament of Paris ought not to have ſuffered, without the ſtrongeſt remonſtrances to the throne. It ought to have ſounded the alarm to the whole nation, as it had often done on things of infinitely leſs importance. Under pretence of reſuſcitating the antient conſtitution, the parliament ſaw one of the ſtrongeſt acts of innovation, and the moſt leading in its conſequences, carried into effect before their eyes; and an innovation through the medium of deſpotiſm; that is, they ſuffered the king's miniſters to new model the whole repreſentation of the *tiers etat*, and, in a great meaſure that of the clergy too, and to deſtroy the antient proportions of the orders. Theſe changes, unqueſtionably the king had no right to make; and here the parliaments failed in their duty, and along with their country, have periſhed by this failure.

What a number of faults have led to this multitude of misfortunes, and almoſt all from this one ſource, that of conſidering certain general maxims, without attending to circumſtances, to times, to places, to conjectures, and to actors! If we do not attend ſcrupulouſly to all theſe, the medicine of to-day becomes the poiſon of to-morrow. If any meaſure was in the abſtract better than another, it was to call the ſtates—*ea viſa ſalus morientibus una*.—Certainly it had the appearance.—But ſee the conſequences of not attending to critical moments, of not regarding the ſymptoms which diſcriminate diſeaſes, and which diſtinguiſh conſtitutions, complexions, and humours.

—— *Mox*

—— Mox fuerat hoc ipſum exitio; furiiſque refecti,
Ardebant; ipſique ſuos, jam morte ſub ægra,
Diſciſſos nudis laniabant dentibus artus.

Thus the potion which was given to ſtrengthen the conſtitution, to heal diviſions, and to compoſe the minds of men, became the ſource of debility, phrenzy, diſcord, and utter diſſolution.

In this, perhaps, I have anſwered, I think, another of your queſtions—Whether the Britiſh conſtitution is adapted to your circumſtances? When I praiſed the Britiſh conſtitution, and wiſhed it to be well ſtudied, I did not mean that its exterior form and poſitive arrangement ſhould become a model for you, or for any people ſervilely to copy. I meant to recommend the *principles* from which it has grown, and the policy on which it has been progreſſively improved out of elements common to you and to us. I am ſure it is no viſionary theory of mine. It is not an advice that ſubjects you to the hazard of any experiment. I believed the antient principles to be wiſe in all caſes of a large empire that would be free. I thought you poſſeſſed our principles in your old forms, in as great a perfection as we did originally. If your ſtates agreed (as I think they did) with your circumſtances, they were beſt for you. As you had a conſtitution formed upon principles ſimilar to ours, my idea was, that you might have improved them as we have done, conforming them to the ſtate and exigencies of the times, and the condition of property in your country, having the conſervation of that property, and the ſubſtantial baſis of your monarchy, as principal objects in all your reforms.

I do not adviſe an houſe of lords to you. Your antient courſe by repreſentatives of the nobleſſe (in your circumſtances) appears to me rather a better inſtitution. I know, that

that with you, a ſet of men of rank have betrayed their conſtituents, their honour, their truſt, their king, and their country, and levelled themſelves with their footmen, that through this degradation they might afterwards put themſelves above their natural equals. Some of theſe perſons have entertained a project, that in reward of this their black perfidy and corruption, they may be choſen to give riſe to a new order, and to eſtabliſh themſelves into an houſe of lords. Do you think that, under the name of a Britiſh conſtitution, I mean to recommend to you ſuch lords, made of ſuch kind of ſtuff? I do not however include in this deſcription all of thoſe who are fond of this ſcheme.

If you were now to form ſuch an houſe of peers, it would bear in my opinion, but little reſemblance to our's in its origin, character, or the purpoſes which it might anſwer, at the ſame time that it would deſtroy your true natural nobility. But if you are not in a condition to frame an houſe of lords, ſtill leſs are you capable, in my opinion, of framing any thing which virtually and ſubſtantially could be anſwerable (for the purpoſes of a ſtable, regular government) to our houſe of commons. That houſe is, within itſelf, a much more ſubtle and artificial combination of parts and powers, than people are generally aware of. What knits it to the other members of the conſtitution; what fits it to be at once the great ſupport, and the great controul of government; what makes it of ſuch admirable ſervice to that monarchy which, if it limits, it ſecures and ſtrengthens, would require a long diſcourſe, belonging to the leiſure of a contemplative man, not to one whoſe duty it is to join in communicating practically to the people the bleſſings of ſuch a conſtitution.

Your *tiers etat* was not in effect and ſubſtance an houſe of commons. You ſtood in abſolute need of ſomething elſe

to

to ſupply the manifeſt defects in ſuch a body as your tiers etat. On a ſober and diſpaſſionate view of your old conſtitution, as connected with all the preſent circumſtances, I was fully perſuaded, that the crown, ſtanding as things have ſtood (and are likely to ſtand, if you are to have any monarchy at all) was and is incapable, alone and by itſelf, of holding a juſt balance between the two orders, and at the ſame time of effecting the interior and exterior purpoſes of a protecting government. I, whoſe leading principle it is, in a reformation of the ſtate, to make uſe of exiſting materials, am of opinion, that the repreſentation of the clergy, as a ſeparate order, was an inſtitution which touched all the orders more nearly than any of them touched the other; that it was well fitted to connect them; and to hold a place in any wiſe monarchical commonwealth. If I refer you to your original conſtitution, and think it, as I do, ſubſtantially a good one, I do not amuſe you in this, more than in other things, with any inventions of mine. A certain intemperance of intellect is the diſeaſe of the time, and the ſource of all its other diſeaſes. I will keep myſelf as untainted by it as I can. Your architects build without a foundation. I would readily lend an helping hand to any ſuperſtructure, when once this is effectually ſecured—but firſt I would ſay δος πᾶ σω.

You think, Sir, and you may think rightly, upon the firſt view of the theory, that to provide for the exigencies of an empire, ſo ſituated and ſo related as that of France, its king ought to be inveſted with powers very much ſuperior to thoſe which the king of England poſſeſſes under the letter of our conſtitution. Every degree of power neceſſary to the ſtate, and not deſtructive to the rational and moral freedom of individuals, to that perſonal liberty, and perſonal ſecurity, which contribute ſo much to the vigour, the proſperity, the

happineſs, and the dignity of a nation—every degree of power which does not ſuppoſe the total abſence of all controul, and all reſponſibility on the part of miniſters,—a king of France, in common ſenſe, ought to poſſeſs. But whether the exact meaſure of authority, aſſigned by the letter of the law to the king of Great Britain, can anſwer to the exterior or interior purpoſes of the French monarchy, is a point which I cannot venture to judge upon. Here, both in the power given, and its limitations, we have always cautiouſly felt our way. The parts of our conſtitution have gradually, and almoſt inſenſibly, in a long courſe of time, accommodated themſelves to each other, and to their common, as well as to their ſeparate purpoſes. But this adaptation of contending parts, as it has not been in our's, ſo it can never be in your's, or in any country, the effect of a ſingle inſtantaneous regulation, and no ſound heads could ever think of doing it in that manner.

I believe, Sir, that many on the continent altogether miſtake the condition of a king of Great Britain. He is a real king, and not an executive officer. If he will not trouble himſelf with contemptible details, nor wiſh to degrade himſelf by becoming a party in little ſquabbles, I am far from ſure, that a king of Great Britain, in whatever concerns him as a king, or indeed as a rational man, who combines his public intereſt with his perſonal ſatisfaction, does not poſſeſs a more real, ſolid, extenſive power, than the king of France was poſſeſſed of before this miſerable revolution. The direct power of the king of England is conſiderable. His indirect, and far more certain power, is great indeed. He ſtands in need of nothing towards dignity; of nothing towards ſplendour; of nothing towards authority; of nothing at all towards conſideration abroad. When was it that a king of England wanted wherewithal to make him reſpected,

reſpected, courted, or perhaps even feared in every ſtate in Europe?

I am conſtantly of opinion, that your ſtates, in three orders, on the footing on which they ſtood in 1614, were capable of being brought into a proper and harmonious combination with royal authority. This conſtitution by eſtates, was the natural, and only juſt repreſentation of France. It grew out of the habitual conditions, relations, and reciprocal claims of men. It grew out of the circumſtances of the country, and out of the ſtate of property. The wretched ſcheme of your preſent maſters, is not to fit the conſtitution to the people, but wholly to deſtroy conditions, to diſſolve relations, to change the ſtate of the nation, and to ſubvert property, in order to fit their country to their theory of a conſtitution.

Until you could make out practically that great work, a combination of oppoſing forces, "a work of labour long, "and endleſs praiſe," the utmoſt caution ought to have been uſed in the reduction of the royal power, which alone was capable of holding together the comparatively heterogeneous maſs of your ſtates. But at this day, all theſe conſiderations are unſeaſonable. To what end ſhould we diſcuſs the limitations of royal power? Your king is in priſon. Why ſpeculate on the meaſure and ſtandard of liberty? I doubt much, very much indeed, whether France is at all ripe for liberty on any ſtandard. Men are qualified for civil liberty, in exact proportion to their diſpoſition to put moral chains upon their own apperites; in proportion as their love to juſtice is above their rapacity; in proportion as their ſoundneſs and ſobriety of underſtanding is above their vanity and preſumption; in proportion as they are more diſpoſed to liſten to the counſels of the wiſe and good, in preference to the flattery of knaves. Society cannot exiſt unleſs a con-

trolling power upon will and appetite be placed ſomewhere, and the leſs of it there is within, the more there muſt be without. It is ordained in the eternal conſtitution of things, that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their paſſions forge their fetters.

This ſentence the prevalent part of your countrymen execute on themſelves. They poſſeſſed, not long ſince, what was next to freedom, a mild paternal monarchy. They deſpiſed it for its weakneſs. They were offered a well-poiſed free conſtitution. It did not ſuit their taſte or their temper. They carved for themſelves; they flew out, murdered, robbed, and rebelled. They have ſucceeded, and put over their country an inſolent tyranny, made up of cruel and inexorable maſters, and that too of a deſcription hitherto not known in the world. The powers and policies by which they have ſucceeded, are not thoſe of great ſtateſmen, or great military commanders, but the practices of incendiaries, aſſaſſins, houſebreakers, robbers, ſpreaders of falſe news, forgers of falſe orders from authority, and other delinquencies, of which ordinary juſtice takes cognizance. Accordingly the ſpirit of their rule is exactly correſpondent to the means by which they obtained it. They act more in the manner of thieves who have got poſſeſſion of an houſe, than of conquerors who have ſubdued a nation.

Oppoſed to theſe, in appearance, but in appearance only, is another band, who call themſelves the *moderate*. Theſe, if I conceive rightly of their conduct, are a ſet of men who approve heartily of the whole new conſtitution, but wiſh to lay heavy on the moſt atrocious of thoſe crimes, by which this fine conſtitution of their's has been obtained. They are a ſort of people who affect to proceed as if they thought that men may deceive without fraud, rob without injuſtice, and overturn every thing without violence. They are men who

would uſurp the government of their country with decency and moderation. In fact they are nothing more or better, than men engaged in deſperate deſigns, with feeble minds. They are not honeſt; they are only ineffectual and unſyſtematic in their iniquity. They are perſons who want not the diſpoſitions, but the energy and vigour, that is neceſſary for great evil machinations. They find that in ſuch deſigns they fall at beſt into a ſecondary rank, and others take the place and lead in uſurpation, which they are not qualified to obtain or to hold. They envy to their companions the natural fruit of their crimes; they join to run them down with the hue and cry of mankind, which purſues their common offences; and then hope to mount into their places on the credit of the ſobriety with which they ſhew themſelves diſpoſed to carry on what may ſeem moſt plauſible in the miſchievous projects they purſue in common. But theſe men naturally are deſpiſed by thoſe who have heads to know, and hearts that are able to go through the neceſſary demands of bold, wicked enterprizes. They are naturally claſſed below the latter deſcription, and will only be uſed by them as inferior inſtruments. They will be only the Fairfaxes of your Cromwells. If they mean honeſtly, why do they not ſtrengthen the arms of honeſt men, to ſupport their antient, legal, wiſe, and free government, given to them in the ſpring of 1788, againſt the inventions of craft, and the theories of ignorance and folly? If they do not, they muſt continue the ſcorn of both parties; ſometimes the tool, ſometimes the incumbrance of that, whoſe views they approve, whoſe conduct they decry. Theſe people are only made to be the ſport of tyrants. They never can obtain or communicate freedom.

You aſk me too, whether we have a committee of reſearch. No, Sir,—God forbid! It is the neceſſary inſtrument of ty-

ranny and uſurpation; and therefore I do not wonder that it has had an early eſtabliſhment under your preſent lords. We do not want it.

Excuſe my length. I have been ſomewhat occupied ſince I was honoured with your letter; and I ſhould not have been able to anſwer it at all, but for the holidays, which have given me means of enjoying the leiſure of the country. I am called to duties which I am neither able nor willing to evade. I muſt ſoon return to my old conflict with the corruptions and oppreſſions which have prevailed in our eaſtern dominions. I muſt turn myſelf wholly from thoſe of France.

In England, we *cannot* work ſo hard as Frenchmen. Frequent relaxation is neceſſary to us. You are naturally more intenſe in your application. I did not know this part of your national character, until I went into France in 1773. At preſent, this your diſpoſition to labour is rather encreaſed than leſſened. In your aſſembly you do not allow yourſelves a receſs even on Sundays. We have two days in the week, beſides the feſtivals; and beſides five or ſix months of the ſummer and autumn. This continued unremitted effort of the members of your aſſembly, I take to be one among the cauſes of the miſchief they have done. They who always labour, can have no true judgment. You never give yourſelves time to cool. You can never ſurvey, from its proper point of ſight, the work you have finiſhed, before you decree its final execution. You can never plan the future by the paſt. You never go into the country, ſoberly and diſpaſſionately to obſerve the effect of your meaſures on their objects. You cannot feel diſtinctly how far the people are rendered better and improved, or more miſerable and depraved, by what you have done. You cannot ſee with your own eyes the ſufferings and afflictions you cauſe. You know

know them but at a diſtance, on the ſtatements of thoſe who always flatter the reigning power, and who, amidſt their repreſentations of the grievances, inflame your minds againſt thoſe who are oppreſſed. Theſe are amongſt the effects of unremitted labour, when men exhauſt their attention, burn out their candles, and are left in the dark.—*Malo meorum negligentiam, quam iſtorum obſcuram diligentiam.*

Beaconsfield,
January 19th 1791.

I have the honor, &c.

(Signed) *EDMUND BURKE.*

AN

APPEAL

FROM

THE NEW

TO

THE OLD WHIGS,

IN CONSEQUENCE OF SOME LATE

DISCUSSIONS IN PARLIAMENT,

RELATIVE TO THE

Reflections on the French Revolution.

1791.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

THERE are ſome corrections in this Edition, which tend to render the ſenſe leſs obſcure in one or two places. The order of the two laſt members is alſo changed, and I believe for the better. This change was made on the ſuggeſtion of a very learned perſon, to the partiality of whoſe friendſhip I owe much; to the ſeverity of whoſe judgment I owe more.

AT Mr. Burke's time of life, and in his diſpoſitions, *petere honeſtam miſſionem* was all he had to do with his political aſſociates. This boon they have not choſen to grant him. With many expreſſions of good-will, in effect they tell him he has loaded the ſtage too long. They conceive it, though an harſh yet a neceſſary office, in full parliament to declare to the preſent age, and to as late a poſterity, as ſhall take any concern in the proceedings of our day, that by one book he has diſgraced the whole tenour of his life.—Thus they diſmiſs their old partner of the war. He is adviſed to retire, whilſt they continue to ſerve the public upon wiſer principles, and under better auſpices.

Whether Diogenes the Cynic was a true philoſopher, cannot eaſily be determined. He has written nothing. But the ſayings of his which are handed down by others, are lively; and may be eaſily and aptly applied on many occaſions by thoſe whoſe wit is not ſo perfect as their memory. This Diogenes (as every one will recollect) was citizen of a little bleak town ſituated on the coaſt of the Euxine, and expoſed to all the buffets of that inhoſpitable ſea. He lived at a great diſtance from thoſe weather-beaten walls, in eaſe and indolence, and in the midſt of literary leiſure, when he was informed that his townſmen had condemned him to be baniſhed from Sinope; he anſwered coolly, "And I condemn them to "live in Sinope."

The gentlemen of the party in which Mr. Burke has always acted, in paſſing upon him the ſentence of retire-

ment *, have done nothing more than to confirm the ſentence which he had long before paſſed upon himſelf. When that retreat was choice, which the tribunal of his peers inflict as puniſhment, it is plain he does not think their ſentence intolerably ſevere. Whether they who are to continue in the Sinope which ſhortly he is to leave, will ſpend the long years which, I hope, remain to them, in a manner more to their ſatisfaction, than he ſhall ſlide down, in ſilence and obſcurity, the ſlope of his declining days, is beſt known to him who meaſures out years, and days, and fortunes.

The quality of the ſentence does not however decide on the juſtice of it. Angry friendſhip is ſometimes as bad as calm enmity. For this reaſon the cold neutrality of abſtract juſtice, is, to a good and clear cauſe, a more deſirable thing than an affection liable to be any way diſturbed. When the trial is by friends, if the deciſion ſhould happen to be favourable, the honor of the acquittal is leſſened; if adverſe, the condemnation is exceedingly embittered. It is aggravated by coming from lips profeſſing friendſhip, and pronounc-

* News-paper intelligence ought always to be received with ſome degree of caution. I do not know that the following paragraph is founded on any authority; but it comes with an air of authority. The paper is profeſſedly in the intereſt of the modern Whigs, and under their direction. The paragraph is not diſclaimed on their part. It profeſſes to be the deciſion of thoſe whom its author calls "The great and firm body of the Whigs of "England." Who are the Whigs of a different compoſition, which the promulgator of the ſentence conſiders as compoſed of fleeting and unſettled particles, I know not, nor whether there be any of that deſcription. The definitive ſentence of "the great and firm "body of the Whigs of England" (as this paper gives it out) is as follows:

"The great and firm body of the Whigs of England, true to their principles, have "decided on the diſpute between Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke; and the former is declared to "have maintained the pure doctrines by which they are bound together, and upon which "they have invariably acted. The conſequence is, that Mr. Burke retires from parliament."

Morning Chronicle, May 12, 1791.

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ing judgment with ſorrow and reluctance. Taking in the whole view of life, it is more ſafe to live under the juriſdiction of ſevere but ſteady reaſon, than under the empire of indulgent, but capricious paſſion. It is certainly well for Mr. Burke that there are impartial men in the world. To them I addreſs myſelf, pending the appeal which on his part is made from the living to the dead, from the modern Whigs to the antient.

The gentlemen, who, in the name of the party, have paſſed ſentence on Mr. Burke's book, in the light of literary criticiſm are judges above all challenge. He did not indeed flatter himſelf, that as a writer, he could claim the approbation of men whoſe talents, in his judgment and in the public judgment, approach to prodigies; if ever ſuch perſons ſhould be diſpoſed to eſtimate the merit of a compoſition upon the ſtandard of their own ability.

In their critical cenſure, though Mr. Burke may find himſelf humbled by it as a writer, as a man and as an Engliſhman, he finds matter not only of conſolation, but of pride. He propoſed to convey to a foreign people, not his own ideas, but the prevalent opinions and ſentiments of a nation, renowned for wiſdom, and celebrated in all ages for a well underſtood and well regulated love of freedom. This was the avowed purpoſe of the far greater part of his work. As that work has not been ill received, and as his critics will not only admit but contend, that this reception could not be owing to any excellence in the compoſition capable of perverting the public judgment, it is clear that he is not diſavowed by the nation whoſe ſentiments he had undertaken to deſcribe. His repreſentation is authenticated by the verdict of his country. Had his piece, as a work of ſkill, been thought worthy of commendation, ſome doubt might have been entertained of the cauſe of his ſucceſs. But the matter

ſtands exactly as he wiſhes it. He is more happy to have his fidelity in repreſentation recognized by the body of the people, than if he were to be ranked in point of ability (and higher he could not be ranked) with thoſe whoſe critical cenſure he has had the misfortune to incur.

It is not from this part of their deciſion which the author wiſhes an appeal. There are things which touch him more nearly. To abandon them would argue, not diffidence in his abilities, but treachery to his cauſe. Had his work been recognized as a pattern for dextrous argument, and powerful eloquence, yet if it tended to eſtabliſh maxims, or to inſpire ſentiments, adverſe to the wiſe and free conſtitution of this kingdom, he would only have cauſe to lament, that it poſſeſſed qualities fitted to perpetuate the memory of his offence. Oblivion would be the only means of his eſcaping the reproaches of poſterity. But, after receiving the common allowance due to the common weakneſs of man, he wiſhes to owe no part of the indulgence of the world to its forgetfulneſs. He is at iſſue with the party, before the preſent, and if ever he can reach it, before the coming, generation.

The author, ſeveral months previous to his publication, well knew, that two gentlemen, both of them poſſeſſed of the moſt diſtinguiſhed abilities, and of a moſt deciſive authority in the party, had differed with him in one of the moſt material points relative to the French revolution; that is in their opinion of the behaviour of the French ſoldiery, and its revolt from its officers. At the time of their public declaration on this ſubject, he did not imagine the opinion of theſe two gentlemen had extended a great way beyond themſelves. He was however well aware of the probability, that perſons of their juſt credit and influence would at length diſpoſe the greater number to an agreement with their ſentiments; and perhaps might induce the whole body to a tacit acquieſcence

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in their declarations, under a natural, and not always an improper diſlike of ſhewing a difference with thoſe who lead their party. I will not deny, that in general this conduct in parties is defenſible; but within what limits the practice is to be circumſcribed, and with what exceptions the doctrine which ſupports it is to be received, it is not my preſent purpoſe to define. The preſent queſtion has nothing to do with their motives; it only regards the public expreſſion of their ſentiments.

The author is compelled, however reluctantly, to receive the ſentence pronounced upon him in the Houſe of Commons as that of the party. It proceeded from the mouth of him who muſt be regarded as its authentic organ. In a diſcuſſion which continued for two days, no one gentleman of the oppoſition interpoſed a negative, or even a doubt, in favour of him or of his opinions. If an idea conſonant to the doctrine of his book, or favourable to his conduct, lurks in the minds of any perſons in that deſcription, it is to be conſidered only as a peculiarity which they indulge to their own private liberty of thinking. The author cannot reckon upon it. It has nothing to do with them as members of a party. In their public capacity, in every thing that meets the public ear, or public eye, the body muſt be conſidered as unanimous.

They muſt have been animated with a very warm zeal againſt thoſe opinions, becauſe they were under no *neceſſity* of acting as they did, from any juſt cauſe of apprehenſion that the errors of this writer ſhould be taken for theirs. They might diſapprove; it was not neceſſary they ſhould *diſavow* him, as they have done in the whole, and in all the parts of his book; becauſe neither in the whole nor in any of the parts, were they, directly, or by any implication, involved. The author was known indeed to have been warmly,

warmly, ſtrenuouſly, and affectionately, againſt all allurements of ambition, and all poſſibility of alienation from pride, or perſonal picque, or peeviſh jealouſy, attached to the Whig party. With one of them he has had a long friendſhip, which he muſt ever remember with a melancholy pleaſure. To the great, real, and amiable virtues, and to the unequalled abilities of that gentleman, he ſhall always join with his country in paying a juſt tribute of applauſe. There are others in that party for whom, without any ſhade of ſorrow, he bears as high a degree of love as can enter into the human heart; and as much veneration as ought to be paid to human creatures; becauſe he firmly believes, that they are endowed with as many and as great virtues, as the nature of man is capable of producing, joined to great clearneſs of intellect, to a juſt judgment, to a wonderful temper, and to true wiſdom. His ſentiments with regard to them can never vary, without ſubjecting him to the juſt indignation of mankind, who are bound, and are generally diſpoſed, to look up with reverence to the beſt patterns of their ſpecies, and ſuch as give a dignity to the nature of which we all participate. For the whole of the party he has high reſpect. Upon a view indeed of the compoſition of all parties, he finds great ſatisfaction. It is, that in leaving the ſervice of his country, he leaves parliament without all compariſon richer in abilities than he found it. Very ſolid and very brilliant talents diſtinguiſh the miniſterial benches. The oppoſite rows are a ſort of ſeminary of genius, and have brought forth ſuch and ſo great talents as never before (amongſt us at leaſt) have appeared together. If their owners are diſpoſed to ſerve their country, (he truſts they are) they are in a condition to render it ſervices of the higheſt importance. If, through miſtake or paſſion, they are led to contribute to its ruin, we ſhall at leaſt have a conſolation

denied to the ruined country that adjoins us—we ſhall not be deſtroyed by men of mean or ſecondary capacities.

All theſe conſiderations of party attachment, of perſonal regard, and of perſonal admiration, rendered the author of the Reflections extremely cautious, leſt the ſlighteſt ſuſpicion ſhould ariſe of his having undertaken to expreſs the ſentiments even of a ſingle man of that deſcription. His words at the outſet of his Reflections are theſe:

"In the firſt letter I had the honour to write to you, and "which at length I ſend, I wrote neither *for*, nor *from* any "deſcription of men; nor ſhall I in this. My errors, if any, "are *my own*. My reputation *alone* is to anſwer for them." In another place, he ſays (p. 126.) "I have *no man's* proxy. "I ſpeak *only* from *myſelf*; when I diſclaim, as I do, with "all poſſible earneſtneſs, all communion with the actors in "that triumph, or with the admirers of it. When I aſſert "any thing elſe, as concerning the people of England, I "ſpeak from obſervation, *not from authority*."

To ſay then, that the book did not contain the ſentiments of their party, is not to contradict the author, or to clear themſelves. If the party had denied his doctrines to be the current opinions of the majority in the nation, they would have put the queſtion on its true iſſue. There, I hope and believe, his cenſurers will find on the trial, that the author is as faithful a repreſentative of the general ſentiment of the people of England, as any perſon amongſt them can be of the ideas of his own party.

The French revolution can have no connexion with the objects of any parties in England formed before the period of that event, unleſs they chooſe to imitate any of its acts, or to conſolidate any principles of that revolution with their own opinions. The French revolution is no part of their original contract. The matter, ſtanding by itſelf, is an open

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ſubject of political diſcuſſion, like all the other revolutions (and there are many) which have been attempted or accompliſhed in our age. But if any conſiderable number of Britiſh ſubjects, taking a factious intereſt in the proceedings of France, begin publicly to incorporate themſelves for the ſubverſion of nothing ſhort of the *whole* conſtitution of this kingdom; to incorporate themſelves for the utter overthrow of the body of its laws, civil and eccleſiaſtical, and with them of the whole ſyſtem of its manners, in favour of the new conſtitution, and of the modern uſages of the French nation, I think no party principle could bind the author not to expreſs his ſentiments ſtrongly againſt ſuch a faction. On the contrary, he was perhaps bound to mark his diſſent, when the leaders of the party were daily going out of their way to make public declarations in parliament, which, notwithſtanding the purity of their intentions, had a tendency to encourage ill-deſigning men in their practices againſt our conſtitution.

The members of this faction leave no doubt of the nature and the extent of the miſchief they mean to produce. They declare it openly and deciſively. Their intentions are not left equivocal. They are put out of all diſpute by the thanks which, formally and as it were officially, they iſſue, in order to recommend, and to promote the circulation of the moſt atrocious and treaſonable libels, againſt all the hitherto cheriſhed objects of the love and veneration of this people. Is it contrary to the duty of a good ſubject, to reprobate ſuch proceedings? Is it alien to the office of a good member of parliament, when ſuch practices encreaſe, and when the audacity of the conſpirators grows with their impunity, to point out in his place their evil tendency to the happy conſtitution which he is choſen to guard? Is it wrong in any ſenſe, to render the people of England ſenſible how much they muſt ſuffer if unfortunately ſuch a wicked faction ſhould

become poſſeſſed in this country of the ſame power which their allies in the very next to us have ſo perfidiouſly uſurped, and ſo outrageouſly abuſed? Is it inhuman to prevent, if poſſible, the ſpilling of *their* blood, or imprudent to guard againſt the effuſion of *our own?* Is it contrary to any of the honeſt principles of party, or repugnant to any of the known duties of friendſhip for any ſenator, reſpectfully, and amicably, to caution his brother members againſt countenancing by inconſiderate expreſſions a ſort of proceeding which it is impoſſible they ſhould deliberately approve?

He had undertaken to demonſtrate, by arguments which he thought could not be refuted, and by documents, which he was ſure could not be denied, that no compariſon was to be made between the Britiſh government, and the French uſurpation.—That they who endeavoured madly to compare them, were by no means making the compariſon of one good ſyſtem with another good ſyſtem, which varied only in local and circumſtantial differences; much leſs, that they were holding out to us a ſuperior pattern of legal liberty, which we might ſubſtitute in the place of our old, and, as they deſcribe it, ſuperannuated conſtitution. He meant to demonſtrate, that the French ſcheme was not a comparative good, but a poſitive evil.—That the queſtion did not at all turn, as it had been ſtated, on a parallel between a monarchy and a republic. He denied that the preſent ſcheme of things in France, did at all deſerve the reſpectable name of a republic: he had therefore no compariſon between monarchies and republics to make.—That what was done in France was a wild attempt to methodize anarchy; to perpetuate and fix diſorder. That it was a foul, impious, monſtrous thing, wholly out of the courſe of moral nature. He undertook to prove, that it was generated in treachery, fraud, falſehood, hypocriſy, and unprovoked murder.—He offered to make

out, that those who have led in that business, had conducted themselves with the utmost perfidy to their colleagues in function, and with the most flagrant perjury both towards their king and their constituents; to the one of whom the assembly had sworn fealty, and to the other, when under no sort of violence or constraint, they had sworn a full obedience to instructions.—That by the terror of assassination, they had driven away a very great number of the members, so as to produce a false appearance of a majority.—That this fictitious majority had fabricated a constitution, which, as now it stands, is a tyranny far beyond any example that can be found in the civilized European world of our age; that therefore the lovers of it must be lovers, not of liberty, but, if they really understand its nature, of the lowest and basest of all servitude.

He proposed to prove, that the present state of things in France is not a transient evil, productive, as some have too favourably represented it, of a lasting good; but that the present evil is only the means of producing future, and (if that were possible) worse evils.—That it is not, an undigested, imperfect, and crude scheme of liberty, which may gradually be mellowed and ripened into an orderly and social freedom; but that it is so fundamentally wrong, as to be utterly incapable of correcting itself by any length of time, or of being formed into any mode of polity, of which a member of the house of commons could publicly declare his approbation.

If it had been permitted to Mr. Burke, he would have shewn distinctly, and in detail, that what the assembly calling itself national, had held out as a large and liberal toleration, is in reality a cruel and insidious religious persecution; infinitely more bitter than any which had been heard of within this century.—That it had a feature in it worse than the old

persecutions.

perſecutions.—That the old perſecutors acted, or pretended to act, from zeal towards ſome ſyſtem of piety and virtue: they gave ſtrong preferences to their own; and if they drove people from one religion, they provided for them another, in which men might take refuge, and expect conſolation.—That their new perſecution is not againſt a variety in conſcience, but againſt all conſcience. That it profeſſes contempt towards its object; and whilſt it treats all religion with ſcorn, is not ſo much as neutral about the modes: It unites the oppoſite evils of intolerance and of indifference.

He could have proved, that it is ſo far from rejecting teſts (as unaccountably had been aſſerted) that the aſſembly had impoſed teſts of a peculiar hardſhip, ariſing from a cruel and premeditated pecuniary fraud: teſts againſt old principles, ſanctioned by the laws, and binding upon the conſcience.—That theſe teſts were not impoſed as titles to ſome new honour or ſome new benefit, but to enable men to hold a poor compenſation for their legal eſtates, of which they had been unjuſtly deprived; and, as they had before been reduced from affluence to indigence, ſo on refuſal to ſwear againſt their conſcience, they are now driven from indigence to famine, and treated with every poſſible degree of outrage, inſult, and inhumanity.—That theſe teſts, which their impoſers well knew would not be taken, were intended for the very purpoſe of cheating their miſerable victims out of the compenſation which the tyrannic impoſtors of the aſſembly had previouſly and purpoſely rendered the public unable to pay. That thus their ultimate violence aroſe from their original fraud.

He would have ſhewn that the univerſal peace and concord amongſt nations, which theſe common enemies to mankind had held out with the ſame fraudulent ends and pretences with which they had uniformly conducted every part

of their proceeding, was a coarſe and clumſy deception, unworthy to be propoſed as an example, by an informed and ſagacious Britiſh ſenator, to any other country.—That far from peace and good-will to men, they meditated war againſt all other governments; and propoſed ſyſtematically to excite in them all the very worſt kind of ſeditions, in order to lead to their common deſtruction.—That they had diſcovered, in the few inſtances in which they have hitherto had the power of diſcovering it, (as at Avignon, and in the Comtat, at Cavaillon and at Carpentras) in what a ſavage manner they mean to conduct the ſeditions and wars they have planned againſt their neighbours for the ſake of putting themſelves at the head of a confederation of republics as wild and as miſchievous as their own. He would have ſhewn in what manner that wicked ſcheme was carried on in thoſe places, without being directly either owned or diſclaimed, in hopes that the undone people ſhould at length be obliged to fly to their tyrannic protection, as ſome ſort of refuge from their barbarous and treacherous hoſtility. He would have ſhewn from thoſe examples, that neither this nor any other ſociety could be in ſafety as long as ſuch a public enemy was in a condition to continue directly or indirectly ſuch practices againſt its peace.—That Great Britain was a principal object of their machinations; and that they had begun by eſtabliſhing correſpondences, communications, and a ſort of federal union with the factious here.—That no practical enjoyment of a thing ſo imperfect and precarious, as human happineſs muſt be, even under the very beſt of governments, could be a ſecurity for the exiſtence of theſe governments, during the prevalence of the principles of France, propagated from that grand ſchool of every diſorder, and every vice.

He was prepared to ſhew the madneſs of their declaration of the pretended rights of man; the childiſh futility of

ſome of their maxims; the groſs and ſtupid abſurdity, and the palpable falſity of others; and the miſchievous tendency of all ſuch declarations to the wellbeing of men and of citizens, and to the ſafety and proſperity of every juſt commonwealth. He was prepared to ſhew that, in their conduct, the aſſembly had directly violated not only every ſound principle of government, but every one, without exception, of their own falſe or futile maxims; and indeed every rule they had pretended to lay down for their own direction.

In a word, he was ready to ſhew, that thoſe who could, after ſuch a full and fair expoſure, continue to countenance the French inſanity, were not miſtaken politicians, but bad men; but he thought that in this caſe, as in many others, ignorance had been the cauſe of admiration.

Theſe are ſtrong aſſertions. They required ſtrong proofs. The member who laid down theſe poſitions was and is ready to give, in his place, to each poſition deciſive evidence, correſpondent to the nature and quality of the ſeveral allegations.

In order to judge on the propriety of the interruption given to Mr. Burke, in his ſpeech in the committee of the Quebec bill, it is neceſſary to enquire, firſt, whether, on general principles, he ought to have been ſuffered to prove his allegations? Secondly, whether the time he had choſen was ſo very unſeaſonable as to make his exerciſe of a parliamentary right productive of ill effects on his friends or his country? Thirdly, whether the opinions delivered in his book, and which he had begun to expatiate upon that day, were in contradiction to his former principles, and inconſiſtent with the general tenor of his publick conduct?

They who have made eloquent panegyrics on the French revolution, and who think a free diſcuſſion ſo very advantageous in every caſe, and under every circumſtance, ought not,

not, in my opinion, to have prevented their eulogies from being tried on the teſt of facts. If their panegyric had been anſwered with an invective, (bating the difference in point of eloquence) the one would have been as good as the other; that is, they would both of them have been good for nothing. The panegyric and the ſatire ought to be ſuffered to go to trial; and that which ſhrinks from it, muſt be contented to ſtand at beſt as a mere declamation.

I do not think Mr. Burke was wrong in the courſe he took. That which ſeemed to be recommended to him by Mr. Pitt, was rather to extol the Engliſh conſtitution, than to attack the French. I do not determine what would be beſt for Mr. Pitt to do in his ſituation. I do not deny that *he* may have good reaſons for his reſerve. Perhaps they might have been as good for a ſimilar reſerve on the part of Mr. Fox, if his zeal had ſuffered him to liſten to them. But there were no motives of miniſterial prudence, or of that prudence which ought to guide a man perhaps on the eve of being miniſter, to reſtrain the author of the Reflections. He is in no office under the crown; he is not the organ of any party.

The excellencies of the Britiſh conſtitution had already exerciſed and exhauſted the talents of the beſt thinkers, and the moſt eloquent writers and ſpeakers, that the world ever ſaw. But in the preſent caſe, a ſyſtem declared to be far better, and which certainly is much newer (to reſtleſs and unſtable minds no ſmall recommendation) was held out to the admiration of the good people of England. In that caſe, it was ſurely proper for thoſe, who had far other thoughts of the French conſtitution, to ſcrutinize that plan which has been recommended to our imitation by active and zealous factions, at home and abroad. Our complexion is ſuch, that we are palled with enjoyment, and ſtimulated with hope, that we become leſs ſenſible to a long-poſſeſſed benefit, from

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the very circumſtance that it is become habitual. Specious, untried, ambiguous proſpects of new advantage recommend themſelves to the ſpirit of adventure, which more or leſs prevails in every mind. From this temper, men, and factions, and nations too, have ſacrificed the good, of which they had been in aſſured poſſeſſion, in favour of wild and irrational expectations. What ſhould hinder Mr. Burke, if he thought this temper likely, at one time or other, to prevail in our country, from expoſing to a multitude, eager to game, the falſe calculations of this lottery of fraud?

I allow, as I ought to do, for the effuſions which come from a *general* zeal for liberty. This is to be indulged, and even to be encouraged, as long as the *queſtion is general.* An orator, above all men, ought to be allowed a full and free uſe of the praiſe of liberty. A common place in favour of ſlavery and tyranny delivered to a popular aſſembly, would indeed be a bold defiance to all the principles of rhetoric. But in a queſtion whether any particular conſtitution is or is not a plan of rational liberty, this kind of rhetorical flouriſh in favour of freedom in general, is ſurely a little out of its place. It is virtually a begging of the queſtion. It is a ſong of triumph, before the battle.

"But Mr. Fox does not make the panegyric of the new "conſtitution; it is the deſtruction only of the abſolute mo-"narchy he commends." When that nameleſs thing which has been lately ſet up in France was deſcribed as "the moſt "ſtupendous and glorious edifice of liberty, which had been "erected on the foundation of human integrity in any time "or country," it might at firſt have led the hearer into an opinion, that the conſtruction of the new fabric was an object of admiration, as well as the demolition of the old. Mr. Fox, however, has explained himſelf; and it would be too like that captious and cavilling ſpirit, which I ſo perfectly de-

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teſt, if I were to pin down the language of an eloquent and ardent mind, to the punctilious exactneſs of a pleader. Then Mr. Fox did not mean to applaud that monſtrous thing, which, by the courteſy of France, they call a conſtitution. I eaſily believe it. Far from meriting the praiſes of a great genius like Mr. Fox, it cannot be approved by any man of common ſenſe, or common information. He cannot admire the change of one piece of barbariſm for another, and a worſe. He cannot rejoice at the deſtruction of a monarchy, mitigated by manners, reſpectful to laws and uſages, and attentive, perhaps but too attentive to public opinion, in favour of the tyranny of a licentious, ferocious, and ſavage multitude, without laws, manners, or morals, and which ſo far from reſpecting the general ſenſe of mankind, inſolently endeavours to alter all the principles and opinions, which have hitherto guided and contained the world, and to force them into a conformity to their views and actions. His mind is made to better things.

That a man ſhould rejoice and triumph in the deſtruction of an abſolute monarchy; that in ſuch an event he ſhould overlook the captivity, diſgrace, and degradation of an unfortunate prince, and the continual danger to a life which exiſts only to be endangered; that he ſhould overlook the utter ruin of whole orders and claſſes of men, extending itſelf directly, or in its neareſt conſequences, to at leaſt a million of our kind, and to at leaſt the temporary wretchedneſs of an whole community, I do not deny to be in ſome ſort natural: becauſe, when people ſee a political object, which they ardently deſire, but in one point of view, they are apt extremely to palliate, or underrate the evils which may ariſe in obtaining it. This is no reflection on the humanity of thoſe perſons. Their good-nature I am the laſt man in the world to diſpute. It only ſhews that they are not ſufficiently informed,

formed, or ſufficiently conſiderate. When they come to reflect ſeriouſly on the tranſaction, they will think themſelves bound to examine what the object is that has been acquired by all this havock. They will hardly aſſert that the deſtruction of an abſolute monarchy is a thing good in itſelf, without any ſort of reference to the antecedent ſtate of things, or to conſequences which reſult from the change; without any conſideration whether under its ancient rule a country was, to a conſiderable degree, flouriſhing and populous, highly cultivated, and highly commercial; and whether, under that domination, though perſonal liberty had been precarious and inſecure, property at leaſt was ever violated. They cannot take the moral ſympathies of the human mind along with them, in abſtractions ſeparated from the good or evil condition of the ſtate, from the quality of actions, and the character of the actors. None of us love abſolute and uncontrolled monarchy; but we could not rejoice at the ſufferings of a Marcus Aurelius, or a Trajan, who were abſolute monarchs, as we do when Nero is condemned by the ſenate to be puniſhed *more majorum:* Nor when that monſter was obliged to fly with his wife Sporus, and to drink puddle, were men affected in the ſame manner, as when the venerable Galba, with all his faults and errors, was murdered by a revolted mercenary ſoldiery. With ſuch things before our eyes our feelings contradict our theories; and when this is the caſe, the feelings are true, and the theory is falſe. What I contend for is, that in commending the deſtruction of an abſolute monarchy, *all the circumſtances* ought not to be wholly overlooked, as conſiderations fit only for ſhallow and ſuperficial minds.

The ſubverſion of a government, to deſerve any praiſe, muſt be conſidered but as a ſtep preparatory to the formation of ſomething better, either in the ſcheme of the government

itſelf, or in the perſons who adminiſter in it, or in both. Theſe events cannot in reaſon be ſeparated. For inſtance, when we praiſe our revolution of 1688, though the nation, in that act, was on the defenſive, and was juſtified in incurring all the evils of a defenſive war, we do not reſt there. We always combine with the ſubverſion of the old government the happy ſettlement which followed. When we eſtimate that revolution, we mean to comprehend in our calculation both the value of the thing parted with, and the value of the thing received in exchange.

The burthen of proof lies heavily on thoſe who tear to pieces the whole frame and contexture of their country, that they could find no other way of ſettling a government fit to obtain its rational ends, except that which they have purſued by means unfavourable to all the preſent happineſs of millions of people, and to the utter ruin of ſeveral hundreds of thouſands. In their political arrangements, men have no right to put the well-being of the preſent generation wholly out of the queſtion. Perhaps the only moral truſt with any certainty in our hands, is the care of our own time. With regard to futurity, we are to treat it like a ward. We are not ſo to attempt an improvement of his fortune, as to put the capital of his eſtate to any hazard.

It is not worth our while to diſcuſs, like ſophiſters, whether, in no caſe, ſome evil, for the ſake of ſome benefit is to be tolerated. Nothing univerſal can be rationally affirmed on any moral, or any political ſubject. Pure metaphyſical abſtraction does not belong to theſe matters. The lines of morality are not like the ideal lines of mathematics. They are broad and deep as well as long. They admit of exceptions; they demand modifications. Theſe exceptions and modifications are not made by the proceſs of logic, but by the rules of prudence. Prudence is not only the firſt in

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rank of the virtues political and moral, but ſhe is the director, the regulator, the ſtandard of them all. Metaphyſics cannot live without definition; but prudence is cautious how ſhe defines. Our courts cannot be more fearful in ſuffering fictitious caſes to be brought before them for eliciting their determination on a point of law, than prudent moraliſts are in putting extreme and hazardous caſes of conſcience upon emergencies not exiſting. Without attempting therefore to define, what never can be defined, the caſe of a revolution in government, this, I think, may be ſafely affirmed, that a ſore and preſſing evil is to be removed, and that a good, great in its amount, and unequivocal in its nature, muſt be probable almoſt to certainty, before the ineſtimable price of our own morals, and the well-being of a number of our fellow-citizens, is paid for a revolution. If ever we ought to be œconomiſts even to parſimony, it is in the voluntary production of evil. Every revolution contains in it ſomething of evil.

It muſt always be, to thoſe who are the greateſt amateurs, or even profeſſors of revolutions, a matter very hard to prove, that the late French government was ſo bad, that nothing worſe in the infinite devices of men, could come in its place. They who have brought France to its preſent condition ought to prove alſo, by ſomething better than prattling about the Baſtile, that their ſubverted government was as incapable, as the preſent certainly is, of all improvement and correction. How dare they to ſay ſo who have never made that experiment? They are experimenters by their trade. They have made an hundred others, infinitely more hazardous.

The Engliſh admirers of the forty-eight thouſand republics which form the French federation, praiſe them not for what they are, but for what they are to become. They do not

talk as politicians but as prophets. But in whatever character they chooſe to found panegyric on prediction, it will be thought a little ſingular to praiſe any work, not for its own merits, but for the merits of ſomething elſe which may ſucceed to it. When any political inſtitution is praiſed, in ſpite of great and prominent faults of every kind, and in all its parts, it muſt be ſuppoſed to have ſomething excellent in its fundamental principles. It muſt be ſhewn that it is right though imperfect; that it is not only by poſſibility ſuſceptible of improvement, but that it contains in it a principle tending to its melioration.

Before they attempt to ſhew this progreſſion of their favourite work, from abſolute pravity to finiſhed perfection, they will find themſelves engaged in a civil war with thoſe whoſe cauſe they maintain. What! alter our ſublime conſtitution, the glory of France, the envy of the world, the pattern for mankind, the maſter-piece of legiſlation, the collected and concentrated glory of this enlightened age! Have we not produced it ready made and ready armed, mature in its birth, a perfect goddeſs of wiſdom and of war, hammered by our blackſmith midwives out of the brain of Jupiter himſelf? Have we not ſworn our devout, profane, believing, infidel people, to an allegiance to this goddeſs, even before ſhe had burſt the *dura mater*, and as yet exiſted only in embryo? Have we not ſolemnly declared this conſtitution unalterable by any future legiſlature? Have we not bound it on poſterity for ever, though our abettors have declared that no one generation is competent to bind another? Have we not obliged the members of every future aſſembly to qualify themſelves for their ſeats by ſwearing to its conſervation.

Indeed the French conſtitution always muſt be (if a change is not made in all their principles and fundamental arrangements)

arrangements) a government wholly by popular repreſentation. It muſt be this or nothing. The French faction conſiders as an uſurpation, as an atrocious violation of the indefeaſible rights of man, every other deſcription of government. Take it or leave it; there is no medium. Let the irrefragable doctors fight out their own controverſy in their own way, and with their own weapons; and when they are tired let them commence a treaty of peace. Let the plenipotentiary ſophiſters of England ſettle with the diplomatic ſophiſters of France in what manner right is to be corrected by an infuſion of wrong, and how truth may be rendered more true by a due intermixture of falſehood.

Having ſufficiently proved, that nothing could make it *generally* improper for Mr. Burke to prove what he had alleged concerning the object of this diſpute, I paſs to the ſecond queſtion, that is, whether he was juſtified in chooſing the committee on the Quebec bill as the field for this diſcuſſion? If it were neceſſary, it might be ſhewn, that he was not the firſt to bring theſe diſcuſſions into parliament, nor the firſt to renew them in this ſeſſion. The fact is notorious. As to the Quebec bill, they were introduced into the debate upon that ſubject for two plain reaſons; firſt, that as he thought it *then* not adviſeable to make the proceedings of the factious ſocieties the ſubject of a direct motion, he had no other way open to him. Nobody has attempted to ſhew, that it was at all admiſſible into any other buſineſs before the houſe. Here every thing was favourable. Here was a bill to form a new conſtitution for a French province under Engliſh dominion. The queſtion naturally aroſe, whether we ſhould ſettle that conſtitution upon Engliſh ideas, or upon French. This furniſhed an opportunity for examining into the value of the French conſtitution, either conſidered as applicable to colonial government, or in its own

own nature. The bill too was in a committee. By the privilege of ſpeaking as often as he pleaſed, he hoped in ſome meaſure to ſupply the want of ſupport which he had but too much reaſon to apprehend. In a committee it was always in his power to bring the queſtions from generalities to facts; from declamation to diſcuſſion. Some benefit he actually received from this privilege. Theſe are plain, obvious, natural reaſons for his conduct. I believe they are the true, and the only true ones.

They who juſtify the frequent interruptions, which at length wholly diſabled him from proceeding, attribute their conduct to a very different interpretation of his motives. They ſay, that through corruption, or malice, or folly, he was acting his part in a plot to make his friend Mr. Fox paſs for a republican; and thereby to prevent the gracious intentions of his ſovereign from taking effect, which at that time had began to diſcloſe themſelves in his favour *. This is a pretty

* To explain this, it will be neceſſary to advert to a paragraph which appeared in a paper in the minority intereſt ſome time before this debate. " A very dark intrigue has " lately been diſcovered, the authors of which are well known to us; but until the glori- " ous day ſhall come, when it will not be a LIBEL to tell the TRUTH, we muſt not be ſo " regardleſs of our own ſafety, as to publiſh their names. We will, however, ſtate the " fact, leaving it to the ingenuity of our readers to diſcover what we dare not " publiſh.

" Since the buſineſs of the armament againſt Ruſſia has been under diſcuſſion, a great " perſonage has been heard to ſay, ' that he was not ſo wedded to Mr. PITT, as not to be " ' very willing to give his confidence to Mr. Fox, if the latter ſhould be able, in a " ' criſis like the preſent, to conduct the government of the country with greater advantage " ' to the public.'

" This patriotic declaration immediately alarmed the ſwarm of courtly inſects that live " only in the ſunſhine of miniſterial favour. It was thought to be the forerunner of the " diſmiſſion of Mr. PITT, and every engine was ſet at work for the purpoſe of preventing " ſuch an event. The principal engine employed on this occaſion was CALUMNY. It " was whiſpered in the ear of a great perſonage, that Mr. Fox was the laſt man in " England

pretty ſerious charge. This, on Mr. Burke's part, would be ſomething more than miſtake; ſomething worſe than formal irregularity. Any contumely, any outrage is readily paſſed over, by the indulgence which we all owe to ſudden paſſion. Theſe things are ſoon forgot upon occaſions in which all men are ſo apt to forget themſelves. Deliberate injuries, to a degree muſt be remembered, becauſe they require deliberate precautions to be ſecured againſt their return.

I am authorized to ſay for Mr. Burke, that he conſiders that cauſe aſſigned for the outrage offered to him, as ten times worſe than the outrage itſelf. There is ſuch a ſtrange confuſion of ideas on this ſubject, that it is far more difficult to underſtand the nature of the charge, than to refute it

" England to be truſted by a KING, becauſe he was by PRINCIPLE a REPUBLICAN, and " conſequently an enemy to MONARCHY.

" In the diſcuſſion of the Quebec bill which ſtood for yeſterday, it was the intention of " ſome perſons to connect with this ſubject the French revolution, in hopes that Mr. Fox " would be warmed by a colliſion with Mr. Burke, and induced to defend that revolution in " which ſo much power was taken from, and ſo little left in, the crown.

" Had Mr. Fox fallen into the ſnare, his ſpeech on the occaſion would have been laid " before a great perſonage, as a proof that a man who could defend ſuch a revolution, " might be a very good republican, but could not poſſibly be a friend to monarchy.

" But thoſe who laid the ſnare were diſappointed; for Mr. Fox, in the ſhort converſation " which took place yeſterday in the houſe of commons ſaid, that he confeſſedly had thought " favourably of the French revolution; but that moſt certainly he never had, either in " parliament or out of parliament, profeſſed or defended republican principles."

Argus, April 22d, 1791.

Mr. Burke cannot anſwer for the truth, nor prove the falſehood of the ſtory given by the friends of the party in this paper. He only knows that an opinion of its being well or ill authenticated had no influence on his conduct. He meant only, to the beſt of his power, to guard the public againſt the ill deſigns of factions out of doors. What Mr. Burke did in parliament could hardly have been intended to draw Mr. Fox into any declarations unfavourable to his principles, ſince (by the account of thoſe who are his friends) he had long before effectually prevented the ſucceſs of any ſuch ſcandalous deſigns. Mr. Fox's friends have themſelves done away that imputation on Mr. Burke.

when

when underſtood. Mr. Fox's friends were, it ſeems, ſeized with a ſudden panic terror leſt he ſhould paſs for a republican. I do not think they had any ground for this apprehenſion. But let us admit they had. What was there in the Quebec bill, rather than in any other, which could ſubject him or them to that imputation? Nothing in a diſcuſſion of the French conſtitution, which might ariſe on the Quebec bill, could tend to make Mr. Fox paſs for a republican; except he ſhould take occaſion to extol that ſtate of things in France, which affects to be a republic or a confederacy of republics. If ſuch an encomium could make any unfavourable impreſſion on the king's mind, ſurely his voluntary panegyrics on that event, not ſo much introduced as intruded into other debates, with which they had little relation, muſt have produced that effect with much more certainty, and much greater force. The Quebec bill, at worſt, was only one of thoſe opportunities, carefully ſought, and induſtriouſly improved by himſelf. Mr. Sheridan had already brought forth a panegyric on the French ſyſtem in a ſtill higher ſtrain, with full as little demand from the nature of the buſineſs before the houſe, in a ſpeech too good to be ſpeedily forgotten. Mr. Fox followed him without any direct call from the ſubject matter, and upon the ſame ground. To canvaſs the merits of the French conſtitution on the Quebec bill could not draw forth any opinions which were not brought forward before, with no ſmall oſtentation, and with very little of neceſſity, or perhaps of propriety. What mode, or what time of diſcuſſing the conduct of the French faction in England would not equally tend to kindle this enthuſiaſm, and afford thoſe occaſions for panegyric, which, far from ſhunning, Mr. Fox has always induſtriouſly ſought? He himſelf ſaid very truly, in the debate, that no artifices were neceſſary to draw from him his opinions upon that ſubject.

But

But to fall upon Mr. Burke for making an uſe, at worſt not more irregular, of the ſame liberty, is tantamount to a plain declaration, that the topic of France is *tabooed* or forbidden ground to Mr. Burke, and to Mr. Burke alone. But ſurely Mr. Fox is not a republican; and what ſhould hinder him, when ſuch a diſcuſſion came on, from clearing himſelf unequivocally (as his friends ſay he had done near a fortnight before) of all ſuch imputations? Inſtead of being a diſadvantage to him, he would have defeated all his enemies, and Mr. Burke, ſince he has thought proper to reckon him amongſt them.

But it ſeems, ſome news-paper or other had imputed to him republican principles, on occaſion of his conduct upon the Quebec bill. Suppoſing Mr. Burke to have ſeen theſe news-papers (which is to ſuppoſe more than I believe to be true) I would aſk, when did the news-papers forbear to charge Mr. Fox, or Mr. Burke himſelf, with republican principles, or any other principles which they thought could render both of them odious, ſometimes to one deſcription of people, ſometimes to another? Mr. Burke, ſince the publication of his pamphlet, has been a thouſand times charged in the news-papers with holding deſpotic principles. He could not enjoy one moment of domeſtic quiet, he could not perform the leaſt particle of public duty, if he did not altogether diſregard the language of thoſe libels. But however his ſenſibility might be affected by ſuch abuſe, it would in *him* have been thought a moſt ridiculous reaſon for ſhutting up the mouths of Mr. Fox or Mr. Sheridan, ſo as to prevent their delivering their ſentiments of the French revolution,—that forſooth, "the news-papers had lately charged Mr. Burke "with being an enemy to liberty."

I allow that thoſe gentlemen have privileges to which Mr. Burke has no claim. But their friends ought to plead thoſe

privileges; and not to aſſign bad reaſons, on the principle of what is fair between man and man, and thereby to put themſelves on a level with thoſe who can ſo eaſily refute them. Let them ſay at once that his reputation is of no value, and that he has no call to aſſert it; but that theirs is of infinite concern to the party and the public; and to that conſideration he ought to ſacrifice all his opinions, and all his feelings.

In that language I ſhould hear a ſtyle correſpondent to the proceeding; lofty, indeed, but plain and conſiſtent. Admit, however, for a moment, and merely for argument, that this gentleman had as good a right to continue as they had to begin theſe diſcuſſions, in candour and equity they muſt allow that their voluntary deſcant in praiſe of the French conſtitution was as much an oblique attack on Mr. Burke, as Mr. Burke's enquiry into the foundation of this encomium could poſſibly be conſtrued into an imputation upon them. They well knew, that he felt like other men; and of courſe he would think it mean and unworthy, to decline aſſerting in his place, and in the front of able adverſaries, the principles of what he had penned in his cloſet, and without an opponent before him. They could not but be convinced, that declamations of this kind would rouze him; that he muſt think, coming from men of their *calibre*, they were highly miſchievous; that they gave countenance to bad men, and bad deſigns; and, though he was aware that the handling ſuch matters in parliament was delicate, yet he was a man very likely, whenever, much againſt his will, they were brought there, to reſolve, that there they ſhould be thoroughly ſifted. Mr. Fox, early in the preceding ſeſſion, had public notice from Mr. Burke of the light in which he conſidered every attempt to introduce the example of France into the politics of this country; and of his reſolution

to break with his beſt friends, and to join with his worſt enemies to prevent it. He hoped that no ſuch neceſſity would ever exiſt. But in caſe it ſhould, his determination was made. The party knew perfectly that he would at leaſt defend himſelf. He never intended to attack Mr. Fox, nor did he attack him directly or indirectly. His ſpeech kept to its matter. No perſonality was employed even in the remoteſt alluſion. He never did impute to that gentleman any republican principles, or any other bad principles or bad conduct whatſoever. It was far from his words; it was far from his heart. It muſt be remembered, that notwithſtanding the attempt of Mr. Fox, to fix on Mr. Burke an unjuſtifiable change of opinion, and the foul crime of teaching a ſet of maxims to a boy, and afterwards, when theſe maxims became adult in his mature age, of abandoning both the diſciple and the doctrine, Mr. Burke never attempted, in any one particular, either to criminate or to recriminate. It may be ſaid, that he had nothing of the kind in his power. This he does not controvert. He certainly had it not in his inclination. That gentleman had as little ground for the charges which he was ſo eaſily provoked to make upon him.

The gentlemen of the party (I include Mr. Fox) have been kind enough to conſider the diſpute brought on by this buſineſs, and the conſequent ſeparation of Mr. Burke from their corps, as a matter of regret and uneaſineſs. I cannot be of opinion, that by his excluſion they have had any loſs at all. A man whoſe opinions are ſo very adverſe to theirs, adverſe, as it was expreſſed, "as pole to pole," ſo miſchievouſly as well as ſo directly adverſe, that they found themſelves under the neceſſity of ſolemnly diſclaiming them in full parliament, ſuch a man muſt ever be to them a moſt unſeemly and unprofitable incumbrance. A co-operation with him could only ſerve to embarraſs them in all their councils.

They have beſides publicly repreſented him as a man capable of abuſing the docility and confidence of ingenuous youth; and, for a bad reaſon, or for no reaſon, of diſgracing his whole public life by a ſcandalous contradiction of every one of his own acts, writings, and declarations. If theſe charges be true, their excluſion of ſuch a perſon from their body is a circumſtance which does equal honour to their juſtice and their prudence. If they expreſs a degree of ſenſibility in being obliged to execute this wiſe and juſt ſentence, from a conſideration of ſome amiable or ſome pleaſant qualities which in his private life their former friend may happen to poſſeſs, they add, to the praiſe of their wiſdom and firmneſs, the merit of great tenderneſs of heart, and humanity of diſpoſition.

On their ideas, the new Whig party have, in my opinion, acted as became them. The author of the Reflections, however, on his part, cannot, without great ſhame to himſelf, and without entailing everlaſting diſgrace on his poſterity, admit the truth or juſtice of the charges which have been made upon him; or allow that he has in thoſe Reflections diſcovered any principles to which honeſt men are bound to declare, not a ſhade or two of diſſent, but a total fundamental oppoſition. He muſt believe, if he does not mean wilfully to abandon his cauſe and his reputation, that principles fundamentally at variance with thoſe of his book, are fundamentally falſe. What thoſe principles, the antipodes to his, really are, he can only diſcover from that contrariety. He is very unwilling to ſuppoſe, that the doctrines of ſome books lately circulated are the principles of the party; though, from the vehement declarations againſt his opinions, he is at ſome loſs how to judge otherwiſe.

For the preſent, my plan does not render it neceſſary to ſay any thing further concerning the merits either of the one

one ſet of opinions or the other. The author would have diſcuſſed the merits of both in his place, but he was not permitted to do ſo.

I paſs to the next head of charge, Mr. Burke's inconſiſtency. It is certainly a great aggravation of his fault in embracing falſe opinions, that in doing ſo he is not ſuppoſed to fill up a void, but that he is guilty of a dereliction of opinions that are true and laudable. This is the great gift of the charge againſt him. It is not ſo much that he is wrong in his book (that however is alledged alſo) as that he has therein belyed his whole life. I believe, if he could venture to value himſelf upon any thing, it is on the virtue of conſiſtency that he would value himſelf the moſt. Strip him of this, and you leave him naked indeed.

In the caſe of any man who had written ſomething, and ſpoken a great deal, upon very multifarious matter, during upwards of twenty-five years public ſervice, and in as great a variety of important events as perhaps have ever happened in the ſame number of years, it would appear a little hard, in order to charge ſuch a man with inconſiſtency, to ſee collected by his friend, a ſort of digeſt of his ſayings, even to ſuch as were merely ſportive and jocular. This digeſt, however, has been made, with equal pains and partiality, and without bringing out thoſe paſſages of his writings which might tend to ſhew with what reſtrictions any expreſſions, quoted from him, ought to have been underſtood. From a great ſtateſman he did not quite expect this mode of inquiſition. If it only appeared in the works of common pamphleteers, Mr. Burke might ſafely truſt to his reputation. When thus urged, he ought, perhaps, to do a little more. It ſhall be as little as poſſible, for I hope not much is wanting. To be totally ſilent on his charges would not be reſpectful to Mr. Fox. Accuſations ſometimes derive a weight from the

perſons

perſons who make them, to which they are not entitled from their matter.

He who thinks, that the Britiſh conſtitution ought to conſiſt of the three members, of three very different natures, of which it does actually conſiſt, and thinks it his duty to preſerve each of thoſe members in its proper place, and with its proper proportion of power, muſt (as each ſhall happen to be attacked) vindicate the three ſeveral parts on the ſeveral principles peculiarly belonging to them. He cannot aſſert the democratic part on the principles on which monarchy is ſupported; nor can he ſupport monarchy on the principles of democracy; nor can he maintain ariſtocracy on the grounds of the one or of the other, or of both. All theſe he muſt ſupport on grounds that are totally different, though practically they may be, and happily with us they are, brought into one harmonious body. A man could not be conſiſtent in defending ſuch various, and, at firſt view, diſcordant parts of a mixed conſtitution, without that ſort of inconſiſtency with which Mr. Burke ſtands charged.

As any one of the great members of this conſtitution happens to be endangered, he that is a friend to all of them chooſes and preſſes the topics neceſſary for the ſupport of the part attacked, with all the ſtrength, the earneſtneſs, the vehemence, with all the power of ſtating, of argument, and of colouring, which he happens to poſſeſs, and which the caſe demands. He is not to embarraſs the minds of his hearers, or to encumber, or overlay his ſpeech, by bringing into view at once (as if he were reading an academic lecture) all that may and ought, when a juſt occaſion preſents itſelf, to be ſaid in favour of the other members. At that time they are out of the court; there is no queſtion concerning them. Whilſt he oppoſes his defence on the part where the attack is made, he preſumes, that for his regard to the juſt rights

of

of all the reſt, he has credit in every candid mind. He ought not to apprehend, that his raiſing fences about popular privileges this day, will infer that he ought, on the next, to concur with thoſe who would pull down the throne: becauſe on the next he defends the throne, it ought not to be ſuppoſed that he has abandoned the rights of the people.

A man who, among various objects of his equal regard, is ſecure of ſome, and full of anxiety for the fate of others, is apt to go to much greater lengths in his preference of the objects of his immediate ſolicitude than Mr. Burke has ever done. A man ſo circumſtanced often ſeems to undervalue, to vilify, almoſt to reprobate and diſown, thoſe that are out of danger. This is the voice of nature and truth, and not of inconſiſtency and falſe pretence. The danger of any thing very dear to us, removes, for the moment, every other affection from the mind. When Priam had his whole thoughts employed on the body of his Hector, he repels with indignation, and drives from him with a thouſand reproaches, his ſurviving ſons, who with an officious piety crouded about him to offer their aſſiſtance. A good critic (there is no better than Mr. Fox) would ſay, that this is a maſter-ſtroke, and marks a deep underſtanding of nature in the father of poetry. He would deſpiſe a Zoilus, who would conclude from this paſſage that Homer meant to repreſent this man of affliction as hating or being indifferent and cold in his affections to the poor reliques of his houſe, or that he preferred a dead carcaſe to his living children.

Mr. Burke does not ſtand in need of an allowance of this kind, which, if he did, by candid critics ought to be granted to him. If the principles of a mixed conſtitution be admitted, he wants no more to juſtify to conſiſtency every thing he has ſaid and done during the courſe of a political life juſt

touching

touching to its cloſe. I believe that gentleman has kept himſelf more clear of running into the faſhion of wild viſionary theories, or of ſeeking popularity through every means, than any man perhaps ever did in the ſame ſituation.

He was the firſt man who, on the huſtings, at a popular election, rejected the authority of inſtructions from conſtituents; or who, in any place, has argued ſo fully againſt it. Perhaps the diſcredit into which that doctrine of compulſive inſtructions under our conſtitution is ſince fallen, may be due, in a great degree, to his oppoſing himſelf to it in that manner, and on that occaſion.

The reforms in repreſentation, and the bills for ſhortening the duration of parliaments, he uniformly and ſteadily oppoſed for many years together, in contradiction to many of his beſt friends. Theſe friends, however, in his better days, when they had more to hope from his ſervice and more to fear from his loſs than now they have, never choſe to find any inconſiſtency between his acts and expreſſions in favour of liberty, and his votes on thoſe queſtions. But there is a time for all things.

Againſt the opinion of many friends, even againſt the ſolicitation of ſome of them, he oppoſed thoſe of the church clergy, who had petitioned the houſe of commons to be diſcharged from the ſubſcription. Although he ſupported the diſſenters in their petition for the indulgence which he had refuſed to the clergy of the eſtabliſhed church, in this, as he was not guilty of it, ſo he was not reproached with inconſiſtency. At the ſame time he promoted, and againſt the wiſh of ſeveral, the clauſe that gave the diſſenting teachers another ſubſcription in the place of that which was then taken away. Neither at that time was the reproach of inconſiſtency brought againſt him. People could then diſtinguiſh

between

between a difference in conduct, under a variation of circumſtances, and an inconſiſtency in principle. It was not then thought neceſſary to be freed of him as of an incumbrance.

Theſe inſtances, a few among many, are produced as an anſwer to the inſinuation of his having purſued high popular courſes, which in his late book he has abandoned. Perhaps in his whole life he has never omitted a fair occaſion, with whatever riſque to him of obloquy as an individual, with whatever detriment to his intereſt as a member of oppoſition, to aſſert the very ſame doctrines which appear in that book. He told the houſe, upon an important occaſion, and pretty early in his ſervice, that "being warned by the ill effect of a contrary procedure in "great examples, he had taken his ideas of liberty very "low; in order that they ſhould ſtick to him, and that he "might ſtick to them to the end of his life."

At popular elections the moſt rigorous caſuiſts will remit a little of their ſeverity. They will allow to a candidate ſome unqualified effuſions in favour of freedom, without binding him to adhere to them in their utmoſt extent. But Mr. Burke put a more ſtrict rule upon himſelf than moſt moraliſts would put upon others. At his firſt offering himſelf to Briſtol, where he was almoſt ſure he ſhould not obtain, on that or any occaſion, a ſingle Tory vote, (in fact he did obtain but one) and reſted wholly on the Whig intereſt, he thought himſelf bound to tell to the electors, both before and after his election, exactly what a repreſentative they had to expect in him.

"The *diſtinguiſhing* part of our conſtitution (he ſaid) is "its liberty. To preſerve that liberty inviolate, is the *pecu*-"*liar* duty and *proper* truſt of a member of the houſe of "commons. But the liberty, the *only* liberty I mean, is a

"liberty connected with *order*, and that not only exiſts *with* "order and virtue, but cannot exiſt at all *without* them. It "inheres in good and ſteady government, as in *its ſubſtance* "*and vital principle*."

The liberty to which Mr. Burke declared himſelf attached, is not French liberty. That liberty is nothing but the rein given to vice and confuſion. Mr. Burke was then, as he was at the writing of his Reflections, awfully impreſſed with the difficulties ariſing from the complex ſtate of our conſtitution and our empire, and that it might require, in different emergencies different ſorts of exertions, and the ſucceſſive call upon all the various principles which uphold and juſtify it. This will appear from what he ſaid at the cloſe of the poll.

"To be a good member of parliament is, let me tell you, "no eaſy taſk; eſpecially at this time, when there is ſo ſtrong "a diſpoſition to run into the perilous extremes of *ſervile* "compliance, *or wild popularity*. To unite circumſpection "with vigour, is abſolutely neceſſary; but it is extremely "difficult. We are now members for a rich commercial "*city*; this city, however, is but a part of a rich commercial "*nation*, the intereſts of which are *various*, *multiform*, *and* "*intricate*. We are members for that great *nation* which, "however, is itſelf but part of a great *empire*, extended by "our virtue and our fortune to the fartheſt limits of the "eaſt and of the weſt. *All* theſe wide-ſpread intereſts muſt "be *conſidered*; muſt be *compared*; muſt be *reconciled*, if "poſſible. We are members for a *free* country; and ſurely "we all know that the machine of a free conſtitution is no "*ſimple* thing; but as *intricate* and as *delicate*, as it is valu-"able. We are members in a *great and antient* MONARCHY; "*and we muſt preſerve religiouſly the true legal rights of the* "*ſovereign, which form the key-ſtone that binds together the* "*noble and well-conſtructed arch of our empire and our con-*"*ſtitution.*

"ſtitution. A conſtitution made up of *balanced powers*, muſt "ever be a critical thing. As ſuch I mean to touch that "part of it which comes within my reach."

In this manner Mr. Burke ſpoke to his conſtituents ſeventeen years ago. He ſpoke, not like a partizan of one particular member of our conſtitution, but as a perſon ſtrongly, and on principle, attached to them all. He thought theſe great and eſſential members ought to be preſerved, and preſerved each in its place; and that the monarchy ought not only to be ſecured in its peculiar exiſtence, but in its preeminence too, as the preſiding and connecting principle of the whole. Let it be conſidered, whether the language of his book, printed in 1790, differs from his ſpeech at Briſtol in 1774.

With equal juſtice his opinions on the American war are introduced, as if in his late work he had belied his conduct and opinions in the debates which aroſe upon that great event. On the American war he never had any opinions which he has ſeen occaſion to retract, or which he has ever retracted. He indeed differs eſſentially from Mr. Fox as to the cauſe of that war. Mr. Fox has been pleaſed to ſay, that the Americans rebelled, 'becauſe they thought they had 'not enjoyed liberty enough.' This cauſe of the war *from him* I have heard of for the firſt time. It is true that thoſe who ſtimulated the nation to that meaſure, did frequently urge this topic. They contended, that the Americans had from the beginning aimed at independence; that from the beginning they meant wholly to throw off the authority of the crown, and to break their connection with the parent country. This Mr. Burke never believed. When he moved his ſecond conciliatory propoſition in the year 1776, he entered into the diſcuſſion of this point at very great length;

and from nine ſeveral heads of preſumption, endeavoured to prove the charge upon that people not to be true.

If the principles of all he has ſaid and wrote on the occaſion, be viewed with common temper, the gentlemen of the party will perceive, that on a ſuppoſition that the Americans had rebelled merely in order to enlarge their liberty, Mr. Burke would have thought very differently of the American cauſe. What might have been in the ſecret thoughts of ſome of their leaders it is impoſſible to ſay. As far as a man, ſo locked up as Dr. Franklin, could be expected to communicate his ideas, I believe he opened them to Mr. Burke. It was, I think, the very day before he ſet out for America, that a very long converſation paſſed between them, and with a greater air of openneſs on the Doctor's ſide than Mr. Burke had obſerved in him before. In this diſcourſe Dr. Franklin lamented, and with apparent ſincerity, the ſeparation which he feared was inevitable between Great Britain and her colonies. He certainly ſpoke of it as an event which gave him the greateſt concern. America, he ſaid, would never again ſee ſuch happy days as ſhe had paſſed under the protection of England. He obſerved, that ours was the only inſtance of a great empire, in which the moſt diſtant parts and members had been as well governed as the metropolis and its vicinage: But that the Americans were going to loſe the means which ſecured to them this rare and precious advantage. The queſtion with them was not whether they were to remain as they had been before the troubles, for better, he allowed they could not hope to be; but whether they were to give up ſo happy a ſituation without a ſtruggle? Mr Burke had ſeveral other converſations with him about that time, in none of which, ſoured and exaſperated as his mind certainly was, did he diſcover any other wiſh in favour

of

of America than for a ſecurity to its *antient* condition. Mr. Burke's converſation with other Americans was large indeed, and his enquiries extenſive and diligent. Truſting to the reſult of all theſe means of information, but truſting much more in the public preſumptive indications I have juſt referred to, and to the reiterated ſolemn declarations of their aſſemblies, he always firmly believed that they were purely on the defenſive in that rebellion. He conſidered the Americans as ſtanding at that time, and in that controverſy, in the ſame relation to England, as England did to king James the Second, in 1688. He believed, that they had taken up arms from one motive only; that is our attempting to tax them without their conſent; to tax them for the purpoſes of maintaining civil and military eſtabliſhments. If this attempt of ours could have been practically eſtabliſhed, he thought with them, that their aſſemblies would become totally uſeleſs; that under the ſyſtem of policy which was then purſued, the Americans could have no ſort of ſecurity for their laws or liberties, or for any part of them; and, that the very circumſtance of *our* freedom would have augmented the weight of *their* ſlavery.

Conſidering the Americans on that defenſive footing, he thought Great Britain ought inſtantly to have cloſed with them by the repeal of the taxing act. He was of opinion that our general rights over that country would have been preſerved by this timely conceſſion*. When, inſtead of this, a Boſton port bill, a Maſſachuſet's charter bill, a Fiſhery bill, an Intercourſe bill, I know not how many hoſtile bills ruſhed out like ſo many tempeſts from all points of the compaſs, and were accompanied firſt with great fleets and armies of Engliſh, and followed afterwards with great bodies of foreign troops, he thought that their cauſe grew daily

* See his ſpeech on American taxation, the 19th of April, 1774.

better,

better, becauſe daily more defenſive; and that ours, becauſe daily more offenſive, grew daily worſe. He therefore in two motions, in two ſucceſſive years, propoſed in parliament many conceſſions beyond what he had reaſon to think in the beginning of the troubles would ever be ſeriouſly demanded.

So circumſtanced, he certainly never could and never did wiſh the coloniſts to be ſubdued by arms. He was fully perſuaded, that if ſuch ſhould be the event, they muſt be held in that ſubdued ſtate by a great body of ſtanding forces, and perhaps of foreign forces. He was ſtrongly of opinion, that ſuch armies, firſt victorious over Engliſhmen, in a conflict for Engliſh conſtitutional rights and privileges, and afterwards habituated (though in America) to keep an Engliſh people in a ſtate of abject ſubjection, would prove fatal in the end to the liberties of England itſelf; that in the mean time this military ſyſtem would lie as an oppreſſive burthen upon the national finances; that it would conſtantly breed and feed new diſcuſſions, full of heat and acrimony, leading poſſibly to a new ſeries of wars; and that foreign powers, whilſt we continued in a ſtate at once burthened and diſtracted, muſt at length obtain a decided ſuperiority over us. On what part of his late publication, or on what expreſſion that might have eſcaped him in that work, is any man authorized to charge Mr. Burke with a contradiction to the line of his conduct, and to the current of his doctrines on the American war? The pamphlet is in the hands of his accuſers, let them point out the paſſage if they can.

Indeed, the author has been well ſifted and ſcrutinized by his friends. He is even called to an account for every jocular and light expreſſion. A ludicrous picture which he made with regard to a paſſage in the ſpeech of a * late miniſter,

* Lord Lanſdown.

has

has been brought up againſt him. That paſſage contained a lamentation for the loſs of monarchy to the Americans, after they had ſeparated from Great Britain. He thought it to be unſeaſonable, ill judged, and ill ſorted with the circumſtances of all the parties. Mr. Burke, it ſeems, conſidered it ridiculous to lament the loſs of ſome monarch or other, to a rebel people, at the moment they had for ever quitted their allegiance to theirs and our ſovereign; at the time when they had broken off all connexion with this nation, and had allied themſelves with its enemies. He certainly muſt have thought it open to ridicule: and, now that it is recalled to his memory, (he had, I believe, wholly forgotten the circumſtance) he recollects that he did treat it with ſome levity. But is it a fair inference from a jeſt on this unſeaſonable lamentation, that he was then an enemy to monarchy either in this or in any other country? The contrary perhaps ought to be inferred, if any thing at all can be argued from pleaſantries good or bad. Is it for this reaſon, or for any thing he has ſaid or done relative to the American war, that he is to enter into an alliance offenſive and defenſive with every rebellion, in every country, under every circumſtance, and raiſed upon whatever pretence? Is it becauſe he did not wiſh the Americans to be ſubdued by arms, that he muſt be inconſiſtent with himſelf, if he reprobates the conduct of thoſe ſocieties in England, who alledging no one act of tyranny or oppreſſion, and complaining of no hoſtile attempt againſt our antient laws, rights, and uſages, are now endeavouring to work the deſtruction of the crown of this kingdom, and the whole of its conſtitution? Is he obliged, from the conceſſions he wiſhed to be made to the colonies, to keep any terms with thoſe clubs and federations, who hold out to us as a pattern for imitation, the proceedings in France, in which a king, who had voluntarily and

formally diveſted himſelf of the right of taxation, and of all other ſpecies of arbitrary power, has been dethroned?—Is it becauſe Mr. Burke wiſhed to have America rather conciliated than vanquiſhed, that he muſt wiſh well to the army of republics which are ſet up in France; a country wherein not the people, but the monarch was wholly on the defenſive (a poor, indeed, and feeble defenſive) to preſerve *ſome fragments* of the royal authority againſt a determined and deſperate body of conſpirators, whoſe object it was, with whatever certainty of crimes, with whatever hazard of war, and every other ſpecies of calamity, to annihilate the *whole* of that authority; to level all ranks, orders, and diſtinctions in the ſtate; and utterly to deſtroy property, not more by their acts than in their principles?

Mr. Burke has been alſo reproached with an inconſiſtency between his late writings and his former conduct, becauſe he had propoſed in parliament ſeveral œconomical, leading to ſeveral conſtitutional reforms. Mr. Burke thought, with a majority of the houſe of commons, that the influence of the crown at one time was too great; but after his majeſty had by a gracious meſſage, and ſeveral ſubſequent acts of parliament, reduced it to a ſtandard which ſatisfied Mr. Fox himſelf, and, apparently at leaſt, contented whoever wiſhed to go fartheſt in that reduction, is Mr. Burke to allow that it would be right for us to proceed to indefinite lengths upon that ſubject? that it would therefore be juſtifiable in a people owing allegiance to a monarchy, and profeſſing to maintain it, not to *reduce*, but wholly to *take away all* prerogative, and *all* influence whatſoever?—Muſt his having made, in virtue of a plan of œconomical regulation, a reduction of the influence of the crown, compel him to allow, that it would be right in the French or in us to bring a king to ſo abject a ſtate, as in function not to be ſo reſpectable as an under

 ſheriff,

ſheriff, but in perſon not to differ from the condition of a mere priſoner? One would think that ſuch a thing as a medium had never been heard of in the moral world.

This mode of arguing from your having done *any* thing in a certain line, to the neceſſity of doing *every* thing, has political conſequences of other moment than thoſe of a logical fallacy. If no man can propoſe any diminution or modification of an invidious or dangerous power or influence in government, without entitling friends turned into adverſaries, to argue him into the deſtruction of all prerogative, and to a ſpoliation of the whole patronage of royalty, I do not know what can more effectually deter perſons of ſober minds from engaging in any reform; nor how the worſt enemies to the liberty of the ſubject could contrive any method more fit to bring all correctives on the power of the crown into ſuſpicion and diſrepute.

If, ſay his accuſers, the dread of too great influence in the crown of Great Britain could juſtify the degree of reform which he adopted, the dread of a return under the deſpotiſm of a monarchy might juſtify the people of France in going much further, and reducing monarchy to its preſent nothing. Mr. Burke does not allow, that a ſufficient argument *ad hominem* is inferable from theſe premiſes. If the horror of the exceſſes of an abſolute monarchy furniſhes a reaſon for aboliſhing it, no monarchy once abſolute (all have been ſo at one period or other) could ever be limited. It muſt be deſtroyed; otherwiſe no way could be found to quiet the fears of thoſe who were formerly ſubjected to that ſway. But the principle of Mr. Burke's proceeding ought to lead him to a very different concluſion;—to this concluſion,—that a monarchy is a thing perfectly ſuſceptible of reform; perfectly ſuſceptible of a balance of power; and that, when reformed and balanced, for a great country, it is the beſt of all govern-

ments. The example of our country might have led France, as it has led him, to perceive that monarchy is not only reconcilable to liberty, but that it may be rendered a great and ſtable ſecurity to its perpetual enjoyment. No correctives which he propoſed to the power of the crown could lead him to approve of a plan of a republic (if ſo it may be reputed) which has no correctives, and which he believes to be incapable of admitting any. No principle of Mr. Burke's conduct or writings obliged him, from conſiſtency, to become an advocate for an exchange of miſchiefs; no principle of his could compel him to juſtify the ſetting up in the place of a mitigated monarchy, a new and far more deſpotic power, under which there is no trace of liberty, except what appears in confuſion and in crime.

Mr. Burke does not admit that the faction predominant in France have aboliſhed their monarchy and the orders of their ſtate, from any dread of arbitrary power that lay heavy on the minds of the people. It is not very long ſince he has been in that country. Whilſt there he converſed with many deſcriptions of its inhabitants. A few perſons of rank did, he allows, diſcover ſtrong and manifeſt tokens of ſuch a ſpirit of liberty, as might be expected one day to break all bounds. Such gentlemen have ſince had more reaſon to repent of their want of foreſight than I hope any of the ſame claſs will ever have in this country. But this ſpirit was far from general even amongſt the gentlemen. As to the lower orders and thoſe a little above them, in whoſe name the preſent powers domineer, they were far from diſcovering any ſort of diſſatisfaction with the power and prerogatives of the crown. That vain people were rather proud of them: they rather deſpiſed the Engliſh for not having a monarch poſſeſſed of ſuch high and perfect authority. *They* had felt nothing from *Lettres de Cachet*. The Baſtile could inſpire no horrors into

them. This was a treat for their betters. It was by art and impulſe; it was by the ſiniſter uſe made of a ſeaſon of ſcarcity; it was under an infinitely diverſified ſucceſſion of wicked pretences, wholly foreign to the queſtion of monarchy or ariſtocracy, that this light people were inſpired with their preſent ſpirit of levelling. Their old vanity was led by art to take another turn: It was dazzled and ſeduced by military liveries, cockades, and epaulets, until the French populace was led to become the willing, but ſtill the proud and thoughtleſs inſtrument and victim of another domination. Neither did that people deſpiſe, or hate, or fear their nobility. On the contrary, they valued themſelves on the generous qualities which diſtinguiſhed the chiefs of their nation.

So far as to the attack on Mr. Burke, in conſequence of his reforms.

To ſhew that he has in his laſt publication abandoned thoſe principles of liberty which have given energy to his youth, and in ſpite of his cenſors will afford repoſe and conſolation to his declining age, thoſe who have thought proper in parliament to declare againſt his book, ought to have produced ſomething in it, which directly or indirectly militates with any rational plan of free government. It is ſomething extraordinary, that they whoſe memories have ſo well ſerved them with regard to light and ludicrous expreſſions which years had conſigned to oblivion, ſhould not have been able to quote a ſingle paſſage in a piece ſo lately publiſhed, which contradicts any thing he has formerly ever ſaid in a ſtyle either ludicrous or ſerious. They quote his former ſpeeches, and his former votes, but not one ſyllable from the book. It is only by a collation of the one with the other that the alledged inconſiſtency can be eſtabliſhed. But as they are unable to cite any ſuch contradictory paſſage, ſo neither can

they ſhew any thing in the general tendency and ſpirit of the whole work unfavourable to a rational and generous ſpirit of liberty; unleſs a warm oppoſition to the ſpirit of levelling, to the ſpirit of impiety, to the ſpirit of proſcription, plunder, murder, and cannibaliſm, be adverſe to the true principles of freedom.

The author of that book is ſuppoſed to have paſſed from extreme to extreme; but he has always kept himſelf in a medium. This charge is not ſo wonderful. It is in the nature of things, that they who are in the centre of a circle ſhould appear directly oppoſed to thoſe who view them from any part of the circumference. In that middle point, however, he will ſtill remain, though he may hear people who themſelves run beyond Aurora and the Ganges, cry out, that he is at the extremity of the weſt.

In the ſame debate Mr. Burke was repreſented as arguing in a manner which implied that the Britiſh conſtitution could not be defended, but by abuſing all republics antient and modern. He ſaid nothing to give the leaſt ground for ſuch a cenſure. He never abuſed all republics. He has never profeſſed himſelf a friend or an enemy to republics or to monarchies in the abſtract. He thought that the circumſtances and habits of every country, which it is always perilous and productive of the greateſt calamities to force, are to decide upon the form of its government. There is nothing in his nature, his temper, or his faculties, which ſhould make him an enemy to any republic modern or antient. Far from it. He has ſtudied the form and ſpirit of republics very early in life; he has ſtudied them with great attention; and with a mind undiſturbed by affection or prejudice. He is indeed convinced that the ſcience of government would be poorly cultivated without that ſtudy. But the reſult in his mind from that inveſtigation has been, and is, that neither

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England nor France, without infinite detriment to them, as well in the event as in the experiment, could be brought into a republican form; but that every thing republican which can be introduced with ſafety into either of them, muſt be built upon a monarchy; built upon a real, not a nominal monarchy, *as its eſſential baſis*; that all ſuch inſtitutions, whether ariſtocratic or democratic, muſt originate from their crown, and in all their proceedings muſt refer to it; that by the energy of that main ſpring alone thoſe republican parts muſt be ſet in action, and from thence muſt derive their whole legal effect, (as amongſt us they actually do) or the whole will fall into confuſion. Theſe republican members have no other point but the crown in which they can poſſibly unite.

This is the opinion expreſſed in Mr. Burke's book. He has never varied in that opinion ſince he came to years of diſcretion. But ſurely, if at any time of his life he had entertained other notions, (which however he has never held or profeſſed to hold) the horrible calamities brought upon a great people, by the wild attempt to force their country into a republic, might be more than ſufficient to undeceive his underſtanding, and to free it for ever from ſuch deſtructive fancies. He is certain, that many, even in France, have been made ſick of their theories by their very ſucceſs in realizing them.

To fortify the imputation of a deſertion from his principles, his conſtant attempts to reform abuſes, have been brought forward. It is true, it has been the buſineſs of his ſtrength to reform abuſes in government; and his laſt feeble efforts are employed in a ſtruggle againſt them. Politically he has lived in that element; politically he will die in it. Before he departs, I will admit for him that he deſerves to have all his titles of merit brought forth, as they have

have been, for grounds of condemnation, if one word, juſtifying or ſupporting abuſes of any ſort, is to be found in that book which has kindled ſo much indignation in the mind of a great man. On the contrary, it ſpares no exiſting abuſe. Its very purpoſe is to make war with abuſes; not, indeed, to make war with the dead, but with thoſe which live, and flouriſh, and reign.

The *purpoſe* for which the abuſes of government are brought into view, forms a very material conſideration in the mode of treating them. The complaints of a friend are things very different from the invectives of an enemy. The charge of abuſes on the late monarchy of France, was not intended to lead to its reformation, but to juſtify its deſtruction. They who have raked into all hiſtory for the faults of kings, and who have aggravated every fault they have found, have acted conſiſtently; becauſe they acted as enemies. No man can be a friend to a tempered monarchy who bears a decided hatred to monarchy itſelf. He who, at the preſent time, is favourable, or even fair to that ſyſtem, muſt act towards it as towards a friend with frailties, who is under the proſecution of implacable foes. I think it a duty in that caſe, not to inflame the public mind againſt the obnoxious perſon, by any exaggeration of his faults. It is our duty rather to palliate his errors and defects, or to caſt them into the ſhade, and induſtriouſly to bring forward any good qualities that he may happen to poſſeſs. But when the man is to be amended, and by amendment to be preſerved, then the line of duty takes another direction. When his ſafety is effectually provided for, it then becomes the office of a friend to urge his faults and vices with all the energy of enlightened affection, to paint them in their moſt vivid colours, and to bring the moral patient to a better habit. Thus I think with regard to individuals; thus I think with regard to antient

tient and reſpected governments and orders of men. A ſpirit of reformation is never more conſiſtent with itſelf, than when it refuſes to be rendered the means of deſtruction.

I ſuppoſe that enough is ſaid upon theſe heads of accuſation. One more I had nearly forgotten, but I ſhall ſoon diſpatch it. The author of the Reflections, in the opening of the laſt parliament, entered on the Journals of the Houſe of Commons a motion for a remonſtrance to the crown, which is ſubſtantially a defence of the preceding parliament, that had been diſſolved under diſpleaſure. It is a defence of Mr. Fox. It is a defence of the Whigs. By what connection of argument, by what aſſociation of ideas, this apology for Mr. Fox and his party is, by him and them, brought to criminate his and their apologiſt, I cannot eaſily divine. It is true, that Mr. Burke received no previous encouragement from Mr. Fox, nor any the leaſt countenance or ſupport at the time when the motion was made, from him or from any gentleman of the party, one only excepted, from whoſe friendſhip, on that and on other occaſions, he derives an honour to which he muſt be dull indeed to be inſenſible*. If that remonſtrance therefore was a falſe or feeble defence of the meaſures of the party, they were in no wiſe affected by it. It ſtands on the Journals. This ſecures to it a permanence which the author cannot expect to any other work of his. Let it ſpeak for itſelf to the preſent age, and to all poſterity. The party had no concern in it; and it can never be quoted againſt them. But in the late debate it was produced, not to clear the party from an improper defence in which they had no ſhare, but for the kind purpoſe of inſinuating an inconſiſtency between the principles of Mr. Burke's defence of the diſſolved parliament, and thoſe on which he proceeded in his late Reflections on France.

* Mr. Windham.

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It requires great ingenuity to make out ſuch a parallel between the two caſes, as to found a charge of inconſiſtency in the principles aſſumed in arguing the one and the other. What relation had Mr. Fox's India bill to the conſtitution of France? What relation had that conſtitution to the queſtion of right, in an houſe of commons, to give or to withhold its confidence from miniſters, and to ſtate that opinion to the crown? What had this diſcuſſion to do with Mr. Burke's idea in 1784, of the ill conſequences which muſt in the end ariſe to the crown from ſetting up the commons at large as an oppoſite intereſt to the commons in parliament? What has this diſcuſſion to do with a recorded warning to the people, of their raſhly forming a precipitate judgment againſt their repreſentatives? What had Mr. Burke's opinion of the danger of introducing new theoretic language unknown to the records of the kingdom, and calculated to excite vexatious queſtions, into a parliamentary proceeding, to do with the French aſſembly, which defies all precedent, and places its whole glory in realizing what had been thought the moſt viſionary theories? What had this in common with the abolition of the French monarchy, or with the principles upon which the Engliſh revolution was juſtified; a revolution in which parliament, in all its acts and all its declarations, religiouſly adheres to 'the form of ſound words,' without excluding from private diſcuſſions, ſuch terms of art as may ſerve to conduct an inquiry for which none but private perſons are reſponſible? Theſe were the topics of Mr. Burke's propoſed remonſtrance; all of which topics ſuppoſe the exiſtence and mutual relation of our three eſtates; as well as the relation of the Eaſt India company to the crown, to parliament, and to the peculiar laws, rights, and uſages of the people of Hindoſtan? What reference, I ſay, had theſe topics to the conſtitution of France, in which there

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is no king, no lords, no commons, no India company to injure or ſupport, no Indian empire to govern or oppreſs? What relation had all or any of theſe, or any queſtion which could ariſe between the prerogatives of the crown and the privileges of parliament, with the cenſure of thoſe factious perſons in Great Britain, whom Mr. Burke ſtates to be engaged, not in favour of privilege againſt prerogative, or of prerogative againſt privilege, but in an open attempt againſt our crown and our parliament; againſt our conſtitution in church and ſtate; againſt all the parts and orders which compoſe the one and the other?

No perſons were more fiercely active againſt Mr. Fox, and againſt the meaſures of the houſe of commons diſſolved in 1784, which Mr. Burke defends in that remonſtrance, than ſeveral of thoſe revolution-makers, whom Mr. Burke condemns alike in his remonſtrance, and in his book. Theſe revolutioniſts indeed may be well thought to vary in their conduct. He is, however, far from accuſing them, in this variation, of the ſmalleſt degree of inconſiſtency. He is perſuaded, that they are totally indifferent at which end they begin the demolition of the conſtitution.—Some are for commencing their operations with the deſtruction of the civil powers, in order the better to pull down the eccleſiaſtical; ſome wiſh to begin with the eccleſiaſtical, in order to facilitate the ruin of the civil; ſome would deſtroy the houſe of commons through the crown; ſome the crown through the houſe of commons; and ſome would overturn both the one and the other through what they call the people. But I believe that this injured writer will think it not at all inconſiſtent with his preſent duty, or with his former life, ſtrenuouſly to oppoſe all the various partizans of deſtruction, let them begin where, or when, or how they will. No man would ſet his face more determinedly againſt thoſe who

ſhould attempt to deprive them, or any deſcription of men, of the rights they poſſeſs. No man would be more ſteady in preventing them from abuſing thoſe rights to the deſtruction of that happy order under which they enjoy them. As to their title to any thing further, it ought to be grounded on the proof they give of the ſafety with which power may be truſted in their hands. When they attempt without diſguiſe, not to win it from our affections, but to force it from our fears, they ſhew, in the character of their means of obtaining it, the uſe they would make of their dominion. That writer is too well read in men, not to know how often the deſire and deſign of a tyrannic domination lurks in the claim of an extravagant liberty. Perhaps in the beginning it *always* diſplays itſelf in that manner. No man has ever affected power which he did not hope from the favour of the exiſting government, in any other mode.

The attacks on the author's conſiſtency relative to France, are (however grievous they may be to his feelings) in a great degree external to him and to us, and comparatively of little moment to the people of England. The ſubſtantial charge upon him is concerning his doctrines relative to the revolution of 1688. Here it is, that they who ſpeak in the name of the party have thought proper to cenſure him the moſt loudly, and with the greateſt aſperity. Here they faſten; and, if they are right in their fact, with ſufficient judgment in their ſelection. If he be guilty in this point he is equally blameable, whether he is conſiſtent or not. If he endeavours to delude his countrymen by a falſe repreſentation of the ſpirit of that leading event, and of the true nature and tenure of the government formed in conſequence of it, he is deeply reſponſible; he is an enemy to the free conſtitution of the kingdom. But he is not guilty in any ſenſe. I maintain that in his Reflections he has ſtated the

revolution

revolution and the ſettlement upon their true principles of legal reaſon and conſtitutional policy.

His authorities are the acts and declarations of parliament given in their proper words. So far as theſe go, nothing can be added to what he has quoted. The queſtion is, whether he has underſtood them rightly. I think they ſpeak plain enough. But we muſt now ſee whether he proceeds with other authority than his own conſtructions; and if he does, on what ſort of authority he proceeds. In this part, his defence will not be made by argument, but by wager of law. He takes his compurgators, his vouchers, his guarantees, along with him. I know, that he will not be ſatisfied with a juſtification proceeding on general reaſons of policy. He muſt be defended on party grounds too; or his cauſe is not ſo tenable as I wiſh it to appear. It muſt be made out for him, not only, that in his conſtruction of theſe public acts and monuments he conforms himſelf to the rules of fair, legal, and logical interpretation; but it muſt be proved that his conſtruction is in perfect harmony with that of the antient whigs, to whom, againſt the ſentence of the modern, on his part, I here appeal.

This July, it will be twenty-ſix years* ſince he became connected with a man whoſe memory will ever be precious to Engliſhmen of all parties, as long as the ideas of honour and virtue, public and private, are underſtood and cheriſhed in this nation. That memory will be kept alive with particular veneration by all rational and honourable whigs. Mr. Burke entered into a connexion with that party, through that man, at an age, far from raw and immature; at thoſe years when men are all they are ever likely to become; when he was in the prime and vigour of his life; when the powers of his underſtanding, according to their ſtandard, were at the

* July 17th, 1765.

beſt; his memory exerciſed; his judgment formed; and his reading, much freſher in the recollection, and much readier in the application, than now it is. He was at that time as likely as moſt men to know what were whig and what were tory principles. He was in a ſituation to diſcern what ſort of whig principles they entertained, with whom it was his wiſh to form an eternal connexion. Fooliſh he would have been at that time of life (more fooliſh than any man who undertakes a public truſt would be thought) to adhere to a cauſe, which he, amongſt all thoſe who were engaged in it, had the leaſt ſanguine hopes of, as a road to power.

There are who remember, that on the removal of the whigs in the year 1766, he was as free to chooſe another connexion as any man in the kingdom. To put himſelf out of the way of the negociations which were then carrying on very eagerly, and through many channels, with the earl of Chatham, he went to Ireland very ſoon after the change of miniſtry, and did not return until the meeting of parliament. He was at that time free from any thing which looked like an engagement. He was further free at the deſire of his friends; for the very day of his return, the marquis of Rockingham wiſhed him to accept an employment under the new ſyſtem. He believes he might have had ſuch a ſituation; but again he cheerfully took his fate with the party.

It would be a ſerious imputation upon the prudence of my friend, to have made even ſuch trivial ſacrifices as it was in his power to make, for principles which he did not truly embrace, or did not perfectly underſtand. In either caſe the folly would have been great. The queſtion now is, whether, when he firſt practically profeſſed whig principles, he underſtood what principles he profeſſed; and whether, in his book, he has faithfully expreſſed them.

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When he entered into the whig party, he did not conceive that they pretended to any diſcoveries. They did not affect to be better whigs, than thoſe were who lived in the days in which principle was put to the teſt. Some of the whigs of thoſe days were then living. They were what the whigs had been at the revolution; what they had been during the reign of queen Anne; what they had been at the acceſſion of the preſent royal family.

What they were at thoſe periods is to be ſeen. It rarely happens to a party to have the opportunity of a clear, authentic, recorded, declaration of their political tenets upon the ſubject of a great conſtitutional event like that of the revolution. The whigs had that opportunity, or, to ſpeak more properly, they made it. The impeachment of Dr. Sacheverel was undertaken by a whig miniſtry and a whig houſe of commons, and carried on before a prevalent and ſteady majority of whig peers. It was carried on for the expreſs purpoſe of ſtating the true grounds and principles of the revolution; what the commons emphatically called their *foundation*. It was carried on for the purpoſe of condemning the principles on which the revolution was firſt oppoſed, and afterwards calumniated, in order by a juridical ſentence of the higheſt authority to confirm and fix whig principles, as they had operated both in the reſiſtance to king James, and in the ſubſequent ſettlement; and to fix them in the extent and with the limitations with which it was meant they ſhould be underſtood by poſterity. The miniſters and managers for the commons were perſons who had, many of them, an active ſhare in the revolution. Moſt of them had ſeen it at an age capable of reflection. The grand event, and all the diſcuſſions which led to it, and followed it, were then alive in the memory and converſation of all men. The managers for the commons muſt be ſuppoſed to have ſpoken

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on that ſubject the prevalent ideas of the leading party in the commons, and of the whig miniſtry. Undoubtedly they ſpoke alſo their own private opinions; and the private opinions of ſuch men are not without weight. They were not *umbratiles doctores*, men who had ſtudied a free conſtitution only in its anatomy, and upon dead ſyſtems. They knew it alive and in action.

In this proceeding, the whig principles, as applied to the revolution and ſettlement, are to be found, or they are to be found no where. I wiſh the whig readers of this appeal firſt to turn to Mr. Burke's Reflections from p. 20. to p. 50; and then to attend to the following extracts from the trial of Dr. Sacheverel. After this, they will conſider two things; firſt, whether the doctrine in Mr. Burke's Reflections be conſonant to that of the whigs of that period; and ſecondly, whether they chooſe to abandon the principles which belonged to the progenitors of ſome of them, and to the predeceſſors of them all, and to learn new principles of whiggiſm, imported from France, and diſſeminated in this country from diſſenting pulpits, from federation ſocieties, and from the pamphlets, which (as containing the political creed of thoſe ſynods) are induſtriouſly circulated in all parts of the two kingdoms. This is their affair, and they will make their option.

Theſe new whigs hold, that the ſovereignty, whether exerciſed by one or many, did not only originate *from* the people (a poſition not denied, nor worth denying or aſſenting to) but that, in the people the ſame ſovereignty conſtantly and unalienably reſides; that the people may lawfully depoſe kings, not only for miſconduct, but without any miſconduct at all; that they may ſet up any new faſhion of government for themſelves, or continue without any government at their pleaſure; that the people are eſſentially their

own rule, and their will the meaſure of their conduct; that the tenure of magiſtracy is not a proper ſubject of contract; becauſe magiſtrates have duties, but no rights: and that if a contract *de facto* is made with them in one age, allowing that it binds at all, it only binds thoſe who were immediately concerned in it, but does not paſs to poſterity. Theſe doctrines concerning the *people* (a term which they are far from accurately defining, but by which, from many circumſtances, it is plain enough they mean their own faction, if they ſhould grow by early arming, by treachery, or violence, into the prevailing force) tend, in my opinion, to the utter ſubverſion, not only of all government, in all modes, and to all ſtable ſecurities to rational freedom, but to all the rules and principles of morality itſelf.

I aſſert, that the antient whigs held doctrines, totally different from thoſe I have laſt mentioned. I aſſert, that the foundations laid down by the commons, on the trial of Doctor Sacheverel, for juſtifying the revolution of 1688, are the very ſame laid down in Mr. Burke's Reflections; that is to ſay,—a breach of the *original contract*, implied and expreſſed in the conſtitution of this country, as a ſcheme of government fundamentally and inviolably fixed in king, lords, and commons.—That the fundamental ſubverſion of this antient conſtitution, by one of its parts, having been attempted, and in effect accompliſhed, juſtified the revolution. That it was juſtified *only* upon the *neceſſity* of the caſe; as the *only* means left for the recovery of that *antient* conſtitution, formed by the *original contract* of the Britiſh ſtate; as well as for the future preſervation of the *ſame* government. Theſe are the points to be proved.

A general opening to the charge againſt Dr. Sacheverel was made by the attorney general, Sir John Montagu; but as there is nothing in that opening ſpeech which tends very

very accurately to ſettle the principle upon which the whigs proceeded in the proſecution (the plan of the ſpeech not requiring it) I proceed to that of Mr. Lechmere, the manager who ſpoke next after him. The following are extracts, given, not in the exact order in which they ſtand in the printed trial, but in that which is thought moſt fit to bring the ideas of the whig commons diſtinctly under our view.

* MR. LECHMERE.

'It becomes an *indiſpenſable* duty upon us, who appear in 'the name and on the behalf of all the commons of Great 'Britain, not only to demand your lordſhips juſtice on ſuch 'a criminal [Dr. Sacheverel] *but clearly and openly to aſſert 'our foundations.*' — — —

That the terms of our conſtitution imply and expreſs an original contract.

'The nature of our conſtitution is that of a *limited mo-'narchy*; wherein the ſupreme power is communicated and 'divided between queen, lords, and commons; though the 'executive power and adminiſtration be wholly in the 'crown. The terms of ſuch a conſtitution do not only ſup-'poſe, but expreſs, an original contract between the crown 'and the people; by which that ſupreme power was (by 'mutual conſent, and not by accident) limited, and lodged 'in more hands than one. And *the uniform preſervation of 'ſuch a conſtitution for ſo many ages, without any funda-'mental change, demonſtrates to your lordſhips the continu-'ance of the ſame contract.*' — — —

That the contract is by mutual conſent, and binding at all times upon the parties.

The mixed conſtitution uniformly preſerved for many ages, and is a proof of the contract.

'The conſequences of ſuch a frame of government are 'obvious. That the *laws* are the rule to both; the common 'meaſure of the power of the crown, and of the obedience 'of the ſubject; and if the executive part endeavours the

Laws the common meaſure to king and ſubject.

* State Trials, vol. v. p. 651.

'*ſubverſion*

'*ſubverſion and total deſtruction of the government*, the original contract is thereby broke, and the right of allegiance ceaſes; that part of the government, thus *fundamentally* injured, hath a right to ſave or recover *that* conſtitution, in which it had an original intereſt.' — — —

Caſe of fundamental injury, and breach of original contract.

'The *neceſſary* means (which is the phraſe uſed by the commons in their firſt article) are words made choice of by them *with the greateſt caution*. Thoſe means are deſcribed (in the preamble to their charge) to be, that glorious enterprize, which his late majeſty undertook, with an armed force, to deliver this kingdom from popery and arbitrary power; the concurrence of many ſubjects of the realm, who came over with him in that enterprize, and of many others of *all ranks and orders*, who appeared in arms in many parts of the kingdom in aid of that enterprize.

Words *neceſſary means* ſelected with caution.

'Theſe were the *means* that brought about the revolution; and which the act that paſſed ſoon after, *declaring the rights and liberties of the ſubject, and ſettling the ſucceſſion of the crown*, intends, when his late majeſty is therein called the *glorious inſtrument of delivering the kingdom*; and which the commons, in the laſt part of their firſt article, expreſs by the word *reſiſtance*.

'But the commons, who will never be unmindful of the *allegiance* of the ſubjects to the *crown* of this realm, judged it highly incumbent upon them, out of regard to the *ſafety of her majeſty's perſon and government, and the antient and legal conſtitution of this kingdom*, to call that reſiſtance the *neceſſary* means; thereby plainly founding that power, right, and reſiſtance, which was exerciſed by the people at the time of the happy revolution, and which the duties of *ſelf-preſervation* and religion called them to, *upon the* NECESSITY *of the caſe, and at the ſame time effectually*

Regard of the commons to their allegiance to the crown, and to the antient conſtitution.

'*tually ſecuring her majeſty's government, and the due alle-*
'*giance of all her ſubjects.*' — — —

All ages have the ſame intereſt in preſervation of the contract, and the ſame conſtitution.

'The nature of ſuch an *original contract* of government
'proves, that there is not only a power in the people, who
'have *inherited this freedom*, to aſſert their own title to it;
'but they are bound in duty to tranſmit the *ſame* conſtitution
'to their poſterity alſo.'

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Mr. Lechmere made a ſecond ſpeech. Notwithſtanding the clear and ſatisfactory manner in which he delivered himſelf in his firſt upon this arduous queſtion, he thinks himſelf bound again diſtinctly to aſſert the ſame foundation; and to juſtify the revolution on the *caſe of neceſſity only*, upon principles perfectly coinciding with thoſe laid down in Mr. Burke's letter on the French affairs.

MR. LECHMERE.

The commons ſtrictly confine their ideas of a revolution to neceſſity alone and ſelf-defence.

'Your lordſhips were acquainted, in opening the charge,
'with how *great caution*, and with what unfeigned regard
'to her majeſty and her government, and the *duty and alle-*
'*giance* of her ſubjects, the commons made uſe of the words
'*neceſſary means*, to expreſs the reſiſtance that was made
'uſe of to bring about the revolution, and with the con-
'demning of which the doctor is charged by this article;
'not doubting but that the honour and juſtice of that
'reſiſtance, *from the neceſſity of that caſe, and to which*
'*alone we have ſtrictly confined ourſelves*, when duly con-
'ſidered, would confirm and ſtrengthen †, and be under-
'ſtood to be an effectual ſecurity for an allegiance of the
'ſubject to the crown of this realm, *in every other caſe where*

† N. B. The remark implies that allegiance would be inſecure without this reſtriction.

'*there*

'*there is not the ſame neceſſity*; and that the right of the 'people to *ſelf-defence, and preſervation of their liberties, by* '*reſiſtance, as their laſt remedy, is the reſult of a caſe of ſuch* 'neceſſity only, *and by which the* original contract *between* '*king and people, is broke. This was the principle laid down* '*and carried through all that was ſaid with reſpect to* alle-'giance; *and on* which foundation, *in the name and on the* '*behalf of all the commons of Great Britain, we aſſert and* '*juſtify that reſiſtance by which the late happy revolution was* '*brought about.*' — — —

'It appears to your lordſhips and the world, that *breaking* '*the original contract between king and people*, were the 'words made choice of by that houſe of commons, [the houſe 'of commons which had originated the declaration of right,] 'with the *greateſt deliberation and judgment*, and approved 'of by your lordſhips, in that firſt and fundamental ſtep 'towards the *re-eſtabliſhment of the government*, which had 'received ſo great a ſhock from the evil counſels which had 'been given to that unfortunate prince.'

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Sir John Hawles, another of the managers, follows the ſteps of his brethren, poſitively affirming the doctrine of non-reſiſtance to government to be the general, moral, religious, and political rule for the ſubject; and juſtifying the revolution on the ſame principle with Mr. Burke, that is, *as an exception from neceſſity*.—Indeed he carries the doctrine on the general idea of non-reſiſtance much further than Mr. Burke has done; and full as far as it can perhaps be ſupported by any duty of *perfect obligation*; however noble and heroic it may be, in many caſes, to ſuffer death rather than diſturb the tranquillity of our country.

* SIR JOHN HAWLES.

'Certainly it muſt be granted, that the doctrine that commands obedience to the ſupreme power, *though in things contrary to nature*, even to ſuffer death, which is the higheſt injuſtice that can be done a man, rather than make an oppoſition to the ſupreme power † [is reaſonable;] becauſe the death of one, or ſome few private perſons, is a leſs evil than *diſturbing the whole government*; that law muſt needs be underſtood to forbid the doing or ſaying any thing to diſturb the government; the rather becauſe the obeying that law cannot be pretended to be againſt nature: and the doctor's refuſing to obey that implicit law, is the reaſon for which he is now proſecuted; though he would have it believed, that the reaſon he is now proſecuted, was for the doctrine he aſſerted of obedience to the ſupreme power; which he might have preached as long as he had pleaſed, and the commons would have taken no offence at it, if he had ſtopped there, and not have taken upon him, on that pretence or occaſion, to have caſt odious colours upon the revolution.'

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General Stanhope was among the managers: He begins his ſpeech by a reference to the opinion of his fellow managers, which he hoped had put beyond all doubt the limits and qualifications that the commons had placed to their

* P. 676.

† The words neceſſary to the completion of the ſentence are wanted in the printed trial—but the conſtruction of the ſentence, as well as the foregoing part of the ſpeech, juſtify the inſertion of ſome ſuch ſupplemental words as the above.

doctrines concerning the revolution; yet not ſatisfied with this general reference, after condemning the principle of non-reſiſtance, which is aſſerted in the ſermon *without any exception*, and ſtating, that under the ſpecious pretence of preaching a peaceable doctrine, Sacheverel and the jacobites meant in reality to excite a rebellion in favour of the pretender, he explicitly limits his ideas of reſiſtance with the boundaries laid down by his colleagues and by Mr. Burke.

GENERAL STANHOPE.

'The conſtitution of England is founded upon *compact*; 'and the ſubjects of this kingdom have, in their ſeveral 'public and private capacities, *as* legal a title to what are 'their rights by law, *as* a prince to the poſſeſſion of his 'crown.

Rights of the ſubject and the crown equally legal.

'Your lordſhips, and moſt that hear me, are witneſſes, 'and muſt remember the *neceſſities* of thoſe times which 'brought about the revolution: that *no other* remedy was 'left to preſerve our religion and liberties; *that reſiſtance 'was* neceſſary *and conſequently juſt*. — —

Juſtice of reſiſtance founded on neceſſity.

'Had the doctor, in the remaining part of his ſermon, 'preached up peace, quietneſs, and the like, and ſhewn 'how happy we are under her majeſty's adminiſtration, and 'exhorted obedience to it, he had never been called to an-'ſwer a charge at your lordſhip's bar. But the tenor of all 'his ſubſequent diſcourſe is one continued invective againſt 'the government.'

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Mr. Walpole (afterwards Sir Robert) was one of the managers on this occaſion. He was an honourable man and a ſound

ſound whig. He was not, as the jacobites and diſcontented whigs of his time have repreſented him, and as ill-informed people ſtill repreſent him, a prodigal and corrupt miniſter. They charged him in their libels and ſeditious converſations as having firſt reduced corruption to a ſyſtem. Such was their cant. But he was far from governing by corruption. He governed by party attachments. The charge of ſyſtematic corruption is leſs applicable to him, perhaps, than to any miniſter who ever ſerved the crown for ſo great a length of time. He gained over very few from the oppoſition. Without being a genius of the firſt claſs, he was an intelligent, prudent, and ſafe miniſter. He loved peace; and he helped to communicate the ſame diſpoſition to nations at leaſt as warlike and reſtleſs as that in which he had the chief direction of affairs. Though he ſerved a maſter who was fond of martial fame, he kept all the eſtabliſhments very low. The land tax continued at two ſhillings in the pound for the greater part of his adminiſtration. The other impoſitions were moderate. The profound repoſe, the equal liberty, the firm protection of juſt laws during the long period of his power, were the principal cauſes of that proſperity which afterwards took ſuch rapid ſtrides towards perfection; and which furniſhed to this nation ability to acquire the military glory which it has ſince obtained, as well as to bear the burthens, the cauſe and conſequence of that warlike reputation. With many virtues, public and private, he had his faults; but his faults were ſuperficial. A careleſs, coarſe, and over familiar ſtyle of diſcourſe, without ſufficient regard to perſons or occaſions, and an almoſt total want of political decorum, were the errors by which he was moſt hurt in the public opinion; and thoſe through which his enemies obtained the greateſt advantage over him. But juſtice muſt be done. The prudence, ſteadineſs, and vigilance of that man,

man, joined to the greateſt poſſible lenity in his character and his politics, preſerved the crown to this royal family; and with it, their laws and liberties to this country. Walpole had no other plan of defence for the revolution, than that of the other managers, and of Mr. Burke; and he gives full as little countenance to any arbitrary attempts, on the part of reſtleſs and factious men, for framing new governments according to their fancies.

MR. WALPOLE.

'Reſiſtance is no where enacted to be legal, but ſubjected, 'by all the laws now in being, to the greateſt penalties. It 'is what is not, cannot, nor ought ever to be deſcribed, or 'affirmed, in any poſitive law, to be excuſable: when, 'and upon what *never-to-be-expected* occaſions, it may be 'exerciſed, no man can foreſee; *and it ought never to be 'thought of, but when an utter ſubverſion of the laws of the 'realm threatens the whole frame of our conſtitution, and no 'redreſs can otherwiſe be hoped for.* It therefore does, and '*ought for ever*, to ſtand, in the eye and letter of the law, as 'the *higheſt offence.* But becauſe any man, or party of men, 'may not, out of folly or wantonneſs, commit treaſon, or 'make their own diſcontents, ill principles, or diſguiſed af-'fections to another intereſt, a pretence to reſiſt the ſupreme 'power, will it follow from thence that the *utmoſt neceſſity* 'ought not to engage a nation, *in its own defence, for the 'preſervation of the whole?*'

Caſe of reſiſtance out of the law; and the higheſt offence.

Utmoſt neceſſity juſtifies it.

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Sir Joſeph Jekyl was, as I have always heard and believed, as nearly as any individual could be, the very ſtandard of whig

whig principles in his age. He was a learned, and an able man; full of honour, integrity, and public ſpirit; no lover of innovation; nor diſpoſed to change his ſolid principles for the giddy faſhion of the hour. Let us hear this whig.

SIR JOSEPH JEKYL.

Commons do not ſtate the limits of ſubmiſſion.

'In clearing up and vindicating the juſtice of the revolu-'tion, which was the ſecond thing propoſed, it is far from 'the intent of the commons to ſtate the *limits and bounds* of 'the ſubject's ſubmiſſion to the ſovereign. That which the 'law hath been wiſely ſilent in, the commons deſire to be 'ſilent in too; nor will they put *any* caſe of a juſtifiable reſiſt-'ance, but that of the revolution only; and *they perſuade* 'themſelves that the doing right to that reſiſtance will be ſo far 'from promoting popular licence or confuſion, that it will have 'a contrary effect, and be a means of ſettling men's minds in 'the love of, and veneration for the laws*; to reſcue and ſe-'cure which, was the ONLY *aim and intention of thoſe con-'cerned in reſiſtance.'

To ſecure the laws, the only aim of the revolution.

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Dr. Sacheverel's counſel defended him on this principle, namely—that whilſt he enforced from the pulpit the general doctrine of non-reſiſtance, he was not obliged to take notice of the theoretic limits which ought to modify that doctrine. Sir Joſeph Jekyl, in his reply, whilſt he controverts its application to the doctor's defence, fully admits and even enforces the principle itſelf, and ſupports the revolution of 1688, as he and all the managers had done before, exactly upon the ſame grounds on which Mr. Burke has built, in his reflections on the French revolution.

SIR

SIR JOSEPH JEKYL.

'If the Doctor had pretended to have ſtated the particular 'bounds and limits of non-reſiſtance, and told the people in 'what caſes they might, or might not reſiſt, *he would have* '*been much to blame*; nor was one word ſaid in the articles, 'or by the managers, as if that was expected from him: 'but, *on the contrary, we have inſiſted, that in NO caſe can* '*reſiſtance be lawful, but in caſe of* extreme neceſſity, *and* '*where the conſtitution cannot otherwiſe be preſerved*; *and* '*ſuch neceſſity ought to be plain and obvious to the ſenſe and* '*judgment of the whole nation*; *and this was the caſe at the* '*revolution.*'

Blameable to ſtate the bounds of non-reſiſtance.

Reſiſtance lawful only in *caſe* of extreme and obvious neceſſity.

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The counſel for Doctor Sacheverel, in defending their client, were driven in reality to abandon the fundamental principles of his doctrine, and to confeſs, that an exception to the general doctrine of paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance did exiſt in the caſe of the revolution. This the managers for the commons conſidered as having gained their cauſe; as their having obtained *the whole* of what they contended for. They congratulated themſelves and the nation on a civil victory, as glorious and as honourable as any that had obtained in arms during that reign of triumphs.

Sir Joſeph Jekyl, in his reply to Harcourt, and the other great men who conducted the cauſe for the tory ſide, ſpoke in the following memorable terms, diſtinctly ſtating the whole of what the Whig houſe of commons contended for, in the name of all their conſtituents:—

SIR JOSEPH JEKYL.

Neceſſity creates an exception, and the revolution a caſe of neceſſity, the utmoſt extent of the demand of the Commons.

'My lords, the conceſſions [the conceſſions of Sacheverel's 'counſel] are theſe:—That *neceſſity* creates an *exception* to 'the general rule of ſubmiſſion to the prince;—that ſuch 'exception is underſtood or implied in the laws that require 'ſuch ſubmiſſion;—and that *the caſe of the revolution was 'a caſe of neceſſity*.

'Theſe are conceſſions *ſo ample*, and do ſo *fully* anſwer 'the drift of the commons in this article, and are to *the ut-'moſt extent of their meaning in it*, that I can't forbear con-'gratulating them upon this ſucceſs of their impeachment; 'that in full parliament, this erroneous doctrine of *unlimited* 'non-reſiſtance is given up and diſclaimed. And may it 'not, in after ages, be an addition to the glories of this 'bright reign, that ſo many of thoſe who are honoured 'with being in her majeſty's ſervice have been at your lord-'ſhips bar, thus ſucceſsfully contending for the *national* 'rights of her people, and proving they are not precarious or 'remedileſs?

'But to return to theſe conceſſions; I muſt appeal to your 'lordſhips, whether they are not a *total departure* from the 'Doctor's anſwer.'

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I now proceed to ſhew that the whig managers for the commons meant to preſerve the government on a firm foundation, by aſſerting the perpetual validity of the ſettlement then made, and its coercive power upon poſterity. I mean to ſhew that they gave no ſort of countenance to any doctrine tending to impreſs the *people*, taken ſeparately from the legiſlature

giſlature which includes the crown, with an idea that *they* had acquired a moral or civil competence to alter (without breach of the original compact on the part of the king) the ſucceſſion to the crown, at their pleaſure; much leſs that they had acquired any right, in the caſe of ſuch an event as cauſed the revolution, to ſet up any new form of government. The author of the Reflections, I believe, thought that no man of common underſtanding could oppoſe to this doctrine, the ordinary ſovereign power, as declared in the act of queen Anne. That is, that the kings or queens of the realm, with the conſent of parliament, are competent to regulate and to ſettle the ſucceſſion of the crown. This power is and ever was inherent in the ſupreme ſovereignty; and was not, as the political divines vainly talk, acquired by the revolution. It is declared in the old ſtatute of queen Elizabeth. Such a power muſt reſide in the complete ſovereignty of every kingdom; and it is in fact exerciſed in all of them. But this right of *competence* in the legiſlature, not in the people, is by the legiſlature itſelf to be exerciſed with *ſound diſcretion*; that is to ſay, it is to be exerciſed or not, in conformity to the fundamental principles of this government; to the rules of moral obligation; and to the faith of pacts, either contained in the nature of the tranſaction, or entered into by the body corporate of the kingdom; which body, in juridical conſtruction, never dies; and in fact never loſes its members at once by death.

Whether this doctrine is reconcileable to the modern philoſophy of government, I believe the author neither knows nor cares; as he has little reſpect for any of that ſort of philoſophy. This may be becauſe his capacity and knowledge do not reach to it. If ſuch be the caſe, he cannot be blamed, if he acts on the ſenſe of that incapacity; he cannot be blamed, if in the moſt arduous and critical queſtions

which can poſſibly ariſe, and which affect to the quick the vital parts of our conſtitution, he takes the ſide which leans moſt to ſafety and ſettlement; that he is reſolved not "to be wiſe "beyond what is written" in the legiſlative record and practice; that when doubts ariſe on them, he endeavours to interpret one ſtatute by another; and to reconcile them all to eſtabliſhed recognized morals, and to the general antient known policy of the laws of England. Two things are equally evident, the firſt is, that the legiſlature poſſeſſes the power of regulating the ſucceſſion of the crown; the ſecond, that in the exerciſe of that right it has uniformly acted as if under the *reſtraints* which the author has ſtated. That author makes what the antients call *mos majorum*, not indeed his ſole, but certainly his principal rule of policy, to guide his judgment in whatever regards our laws. Uniformity and analogy can be preſerved in them by this proceſs only. That point being fixed, and laying faſt hold of a ſtrong bottom, our ſpeculations may ſwing in all directions, without public detriment, becauſe they will ride with ſure anchorage.

In this manner theſe things have been always conſidered by our anceſtors. There are ſome indeed who have the art of turning the very acts of parliament which were made for ſecuring the hereditary ſucceſſion in the preſent royal family by rendering it penal to doubt of the validity of thoſe acts of parliament, into an inſtrument for defeating all their ends and purpoſes: but upon grounds ſo very fooliſh, that it is not worth while to take further notice of ſuch ſophiſtry.

To prevent any unneceſſary ſubdiviſion, I ſhall here put together what may be neceſſary to ſhew the perfect agreement of the whigs with Mr. Burke, in his aſſertions, that the revolution made no "eſſential change in the conſtitu- "tion of the monarchy, or in any of its antient, ſound,

"and

" and legal principles; that the ſucceſſion was ſettled in the " Hanover family, upon the idea, and in the mode of an " hereditary ſucceſſion qualified with Proteſtantiſm; that " it was not ſettled upon *elective* principles, in any ſenſe of " the word *elective*, or under any modification or deſcrip- " tion of *election* whatſoever; but, on the contrary, that the " nation, after the revolution, renewed by a freſh compact " the ſpirit of the original compact of the ſtate, binding " itſelf, *both in its exiſting members and all its poſterity*, to " adhere to the ſettlement of an hereditary ſucceſſion in the " Proteſtant line, drawn from James the Firſt, as the ſtock " of inheritance."

Sir John Hawles.

Neceſſity of ſettling the right of the crown, and ſubmiſſion to the ſettlement.

' If he [Dr. Sacheverel] is of the opinion he pretends, I ' cannot imagine how it comes to paſs, that he that pays ' that deference to the ſupreme power has preached ſo di- ' rectly contrary to the determinations of the ſupreme power ' in this government; he very well knowing that the law- ' fulneſs of the revolution, and of the means whereby it ' was brought about, has already been determined by the ' aforeſaid acts of parliament: and do it in the worſt man- ' ner he could invent. *For queſtioning the right to the crown ' here in England, has procured the ſhedding of more blood, ' and cauſed more ſlaughter, than all the other matters tend- ' ing to diſturbances in the government, put together.* If, ' therefore, the doctrine which the apoſtles had laid down, ' was only to continue the peace of the world, as thinking ' the death of ſome few particular perſons better to be ' borne with than a civil war; ſure it is the higheſt breach ' of that law to queſtion the firſt principles of this govern- ' ment.'

' If

'If the Doctor had been contented with the liberty he 'took of preaching up the duty of paſſive obedience, in the 'moſt extenſive manner he had thought fit, and would 'have ſtopped there, your lordſhips would not have had the 'trouble, in relation to him, that you now have; but it is 'plain, that he preached up his abſolute and unconditional 'obedience, not *to continue the peace and tranquillity of this 'nation, but to ſet the ſubjects at ſtrife, and to raiſe a war 'in the bowels of this nation*; and it is for *this* that he is now 'proſecuted; though he would fain have it believed that 'the proſecution was for preaching the peaceable doctrine 'of abſolute obedience.'

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SIR JOSEPH JEKYL.

Whole frame of government reſtored unhurt on the revolution.

'The whole tenor of the adminiſtration, then in being, 'was agreed by all to be *a total departure from the conſtitu-'tion*. The nation was at that time united in that opinion, 'all but the criminal part of it. And as the nation joined 'in the judgment of their diſeaſe, ſo they did in the re-'medy. *They ſaw there was no remedy left but the laſt*; 'and when that remedy took place, *the whole frame of the 'government was reſtored entire and unhurt* *. This ſhewed

* 'What we did was, in truth and ſubſtance and in a conſtitutional light, a revolution, 'not made, but prevented. We took ſolid ſecurities; we ſettled doubtful queſtions; we 'corrected anomalies in our law. In the ſtable fundamental parts of our conſtitution, we 'made no revolution; no, nor any alteration at all. We did not impair the monarchy. 'Perhaps it might be ſhewn that we ſtrengthened it very conſiderably. The nation kept 'the ſame ranks, the ſame orders, the ſame privileges, the ſame franchiſes, the ſame rules 'for property, the ſame ſubordinations, the ſame order in the law, in the revenue, and in 'the magiſtracy; the ſame lords, the ſame commons, the ſame corporations, the ſame 'electors.' *Mr. Burke's ſpeech in the Houſe of Commons, 9th February* 1790. It appears how exactly he coincides in every thing with Sir Joſeph Jekyl.

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'the excellent temper the nation was in at that time, that, 'after ſuch provocations from an abuſe of the regal power, 'and ſuch a convulſion, *no one part of the conſtitution was* 'altered, *or ſuffered the leaſt damage*; *but, on the contrary,* 'the whole received new life and vigour.'

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The tory counſel for Dr. Sacheverel having inſinuated, that a great and eſſential alteration in the conſtitution had been wrought by the revolution, Sir Joſeph Jekyl is ſo ſtrong on this point, that he takes fire even at the inſinuation of his being of ſuch an opinion.

SIR JOSEPH JEKYL.

'If the Doctor inſtructed his counſel to inſinuate that 'there was *any innovation in the conſtitution wrought by the* 'revolution, *it is an addition to his crime. The revolution* 'did not introduce *any innovation*; *it was a reſtoration of* 'the antient *fundamental conſtitution of the kingdom*, and 'giving it its proper force and energy.'

No innovation at the revolution.

* * * * * * * * * *

The Solicitor General, Sir Robert Eyre, diſtinguiſhes expreſsly the caſe of the revolution, and its principles, from a proceeding at pleaſure, on the part of the people, to change their antient conſtitution, and to frame a new government for themſelves. He diſtinguiſhes it with the ſame care from the principles of regicide, and republicaniſm, and the ſorts of

of reſiſtance condemned by the doctrines of the church of England, and, which ought to be condemned, by the doctrines of all churches profeſſing Chriſtianity.

MR. SOLICITOR GENERAL, SIR ROBERT EYRE.

Revolution no precedent for voluntary cancelling allegiance.

'The reſiſtance at the revolution, which was founded in 'unavoidable neceſſity, could be no defence to a man that 'was attacked *for aſſerting that the people might cancel their 'allegiance at pleaſure, or dethrone and murder their ſove-'reign by a judiciary ſentence.* For it can never be inferred 'from the lawfulneſs of reſiſtance, at a time when *a total 'ſubverſion of the government both in church and ſtate was 'intended*, that a people may take up arms, and *call their 'ſovereign to account at pleaſure*; and, therefore, ſince *the 'revolution could be of no ſervice in giving the leaſt colour 'for aſſerting any ſuch wicked principle*, the Doctor could 'never intend to put it into the mouths of thoſe new 'preachers, and new politicians, for a defence; unleſs it be 'his opinion, that the reſiſtance at the revolution can bear 'any parallel with the *execrable murder of the royal martyr, 'ſo juſtly deteſted by the whole nation.*

Revolution not like the caſe of Charles the Firſt.

'It is plain that the Doctor is not impeached for preaching 'a general doctrine, and enforcing the general duty of obe-'dience, but for preaching againſt an *excepted caſe, after he 'has ſtated the exception.* He is not impeached for preach-'ing the general doctrine of obedience, and the utter illega-'lity of reſiſtance upon any pretence whatſoever; but be-'cauſe, having firſt laid down the general doctrine as true, 'without any exception, *he ſtates the excepted caſe*, the re-'volution, in expreſs terms, as an objection; and then 'aſſuming the conſideration of that excepted caſe, denies

'there was any reſiſtance in the revolution; and aſſerts, 'that to impute reſiſtance to the revolution, would caſt 'black and odious colours upon it. This is not preaching 'the doctrine of non-reſiſtance, in the *general* terms uſed 'by the homilies, and the fathers of the church, where 'caſes of neceſſity may be *underſtood to be excepted by a tacit 'implication, as the counſel have allowed*; but is preaching 'directly againſt the reſiſtance at the revolution, which, in 'the courſe of this debate, has been all along admitted to *be 'neceſſary and juſt*, and can have no other meaning than to 'bring a diſhonour upon the revolution, and an odium 'upon thoſe great and illuſtrious perſons, *thoſe friends to the 'monarchy and the church, that aſſiſted in bringing it about.* 'For had the Doctor intended any thing elſe, he would 'have treated the caſe of the revolution in a different man- 'ner, and have given *it the true and fair anſwer*; he would 'have ſaid, that the reſiſtance at the revolution was *of ab- 'ſolute neceſſity, and the only means left to revive the conſti- 'tution; and muſt therefore be taken as an excepted caſe*, and 'could never come within the reach and intention of the 'general doctrine of the church.

Sacheverel's doctrine intended to bring an odium on the revolution.

True defence of the revolution on abſolute neceſſity.

'Your lordſhips take notice on what grounds the Doctor 'continues to aſſert the ſame poſition in his anſwer. But is 'it not moſt evident, that the general exhortations to be 'met with in the homilies of the church of England, and 'ſuch like declarations in the ſtatutes of the kingdom, are 'meant only as rules for the civil obedience of the ſubject 'to the legal adminiſtration of the ſupreme power in *ordi- 'nary caſes?* And it is equally abſurd, to conſtrue any 'words in a poſitive law to authorize the deſtruction of the 'whole, as to expect that king, lords, and commons ſhould, 'in expreſs terms of law, declare *ſuch an ultimate reſort as*

'*the right of reſiſtance, at a time when the caſe ſuppoſes that the force of all law is ceaſed* *.

Commons abhor whatever ſhakes the ſubmiſſion of poſterity to the ſettlement of the crown.

'The commons muſt always reſent, with the utmoſt deteſtation and abhorrence, every poſition that may ſhake the authority of that act of parliament, whereby the crown is ſettled upon her majeſty, *and whereby the lords ſpiritual and temporal and commons do, in the name of all the people of England, moſt humbly and faithfully ſubmit themſelves, their heirs and poſterities, to her majeſty*, which this general principle of abſolute non-reſiſtance muſt certainly ſhake.

'For, if the reſiſtance at the revolution was illegal, the revolution ſettled in uſurpation, and this act can have no greater force and authority than an act paſſed under an uſurper.

'And the commons take leave to obſerve, that the authority of the parliamentary ſettlement is a matter of the greateſt conſequence to maintain, in a caſe where the hereditary right to the crown is conteſted.

'It appears by the ſeveral inſtances mentioned in the act declaring the rights and liberties of the ſubject, and ſettling the ſucceſſion of the crown, that at the time of the revolution there was *a total ſubverſion of the conſtitution of government both in church and ſtate, which is a caſe that the laws of England could never ſuppoſe, provide for, or have in view.*'

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Sir Joſeph Jekyl, ſo often quoted, conſidered the preſervation of the monarchy, and of the rights and prerogatives of

* See Reflections, p. 54, 55 of this volume.

the

the crown, as eſſential objects with all ſound whigs; and that they were bound, not only to maintain them when injured or invaded, but to exert themſelves as much for their re-eſtabliſhment, if they ſhould happen to be overthrown by popular fury, as any of their own more immediate and popular rights and privileges, if the latter ſhould be at any time ſubverted by the crown. For this reaſon he puts the caſes of the *revolution* and the *reſtoration*, exactly upon the ſame footing. He plainly marks, that it was the object of all honeſt men, not to ſacrifice one part of the conſtitution to another; and much more, not to ſacrifice any of them to viſionary theories of the rights of man; but to preſerve our whole inheritance in the conſtitution, in all its members and all its relations, entire, and unimpaired, from generation to generation. In this Mr. Burke exactly agrees with him.

SIR JOSEPH JEKYL.

'Nothing is plainer than that the people have a right to 'the laws and the conſtitution. This right the nation hath 'aſſerted, and recovered out of the hands of thoſe who had 'diſpoſſeſſed them of it at ſeveral times. There are of this 'two *famous inſtances* in the knowledge of the preſent age; 'I mean that of the *reſtauration*, and that of the *revolu-* 'tion; in both of theſe great events were the *regal power*, 'and the *rights of the people* recovered. And it is *hard to* 'ſay in which the people have the greateſt intereſt; for the 'commons are ſenſible that there is not one legal power be- 'longing to the crown, but they have an intereſt in it; and I 'doubt not but they will always be as careful to ſupport the 'rights of the crown as their own privileges.'

What are the rights of the people.

Reſtoration and revolution.

People have an equal intereſt in the legal rights of the crown and of their own.

The other whig managers regarded (as he did) the overturning of the monarchy by a republican faction with the

very ſame horror and deteſtation with which they regarded the deſtruction of the privileges of the people by an arbitrary monarch.

MR. LECHMERE,

Conſtitution recovered at the reſtoration and revolution.

Speaking of our conſtitution, ſtates it as 'a conſtitution 'which happily recovered itſelf, at the reſtoration, from the 'confuſions and diſorders which *the horrid and deteſtable pro-* '*ceedings of faction and uſurpation had thrown it into*, and 'which, after many convulſions and ſtruggles, was provi- 'dentially ſaved at the late happy revolution; and, by the 'many good laws paſſed ſince that time, ſtands now upon a 'firmer foundation: together with the moſt comfortable 'proſpect of *ſecurity to all poſterity*, by the ſettlement of the 'crown in the proteſtant line.'

* * * * * * * * * * *

I mean now to ſhew that the whigs, (if Sir Joſeph Jekyl was one) and if he ſpoke in conformity to the ſenſe of the whig houſe of commons and the whig miniſtry who employed him, did carefully guard againſt any preſumption that might ariſe from the repeal of the non-reſiſtance oath of Charles the Second, as if, at the revolution, the antient principles of our government were at all changed—or that republican doctrines were countenanced,—or any ſanction given to ſeditious proceedings upon general undefined ideas of miſconduct—or for changing the form of government—or for reſiſtance upon any other ground than the *neceſſity* ſo often mentioned for the purpoſe of ſelf-preſervation. It will ſhew ſtill more clearly the equal care of the then whigs, to prevent either the regal power from being ſwallowed up on pretence

pretence of popular rights, or the popular rights from being deſtroyed on pretence of regal prerogatives.

SIR JOSEPH JEKYL.

'Further, I deſire it may be conſidered, that theſe legiſla-
'tors [the legiſlators who framed the non-reſiſtance oath of
'Charles the Second] were guarding againſt the conſequen-
'ces of thoſe *pernicious and antimonarchical principles, which*
'*had been broached a little before in this nation*; and thoſe
'large declarations in favour of *non-reſiſtance* were made to
'encounter or obviate the *miſchief* of thoſe principles; as
'appears by the preamble to the fulleſt of thoſe acts, which
'is the *militia act*, in the 13th and 14th of King Charles the
'Second. The words of that act are theſe: *And, during the*
'*late uſurped governments, many evil and rebellious principles*
'*have been inſtilled into the minds of the people of this kingdom,*
'*which may break forth, unleſs prevented, to the diſturbance*
'*of the peace and quiet thereof: Be it therefore enacted, &c.*
'Here your lordſhips may ſee the reaſon that inclined thoſe
'legiſlators to expreſs themſelves in ſuch a manner againſt
'reſiſtance. *They had ſeen the regal rights ſwallowed up, un-*
'*der the pretence of popular ones*; and it is no imputation on
'them that they did not then foreſee a *quite different caſe*, as
'was that of the revolution; where, under the pretence of
'regal authority, a total ſubverſion of the rights of the ſub-
'ject was advanced, and in a manner effected. And this
'may ſerve to ſhew, that it was not the deſign of thoſe le-
'giſlators to condemn reſiſtance, in a caſe *of abſolute neceſſity,*
'*for preſerving the conſtitution*, when they were guarding
'againſt principles which had ſo lately deſtroyed it.

Miſchief of broaching anti-monarchical principles.

Two caſes of reſiſtance, one to preſerve the crown, the other the rights of the ſubject.

'As to the truth of the doctrine in this declaration which
'was repealed, *I will admit it to be as true as the Doctor's*
'*counſel*

Non-reſiſtance oath not repealed, becauſe (with the reſtriction of neceſſity) it was

false, but to prevent false interpretations.

'*counsel assert it*; *that is, with an exception of cases of neceſ-*
'*ſity*; and it was not repealed becauſe it was falſe, *under-*
'*ſtanding it with that reſtriction*; but it was repealed becauſe
'it might be interpreted in *an unconfined ſenſe, and excluſive*
'*of that reſtriction*; and being ſo underſtood, would reflect
'on the juſtice of the revolution: and this the legiſlature
'had at heart, and were very jealous of; and by this repeal
'of that declaration, gave a parliamentary or legiſlative ad-
'monition, againſt aſſerting this doctrine of non-reſiſtance
'*in an unlimited ſenſe*.' — — —

General doctrine of non-reſiſtance godly and wholeſome; not bound to ſtate *explicitly* the exceptions.

'Though the general doctrine of non-reſiſtance, the doc-
'trine of the church of England, as ſtated in her homilies,
'or elſewhere delivered, by which the general duty of ſub-
'jects to the higher powers is taught, be owned to be, as
'unqueſtionably it is, *a godly and wholeſome doctrine*;
'though this general doctrine has been conſtantly inculca-
'ted by the reverend fathers of the church, dead and living,
'and preached by them as a preſervative againſt the popiſh
'doctrine of depoſing princes, and as the ordinary rule of
'obedience; and though the ſame doctrine has been
'preached, maintained, and avowed by our moſt orthodox
'and able divines from the time of the reformation; and
'how *innocent a man* Dr. Sacheverel had been, if, *with an*
'*honeſt and well-meant* zeal, he had preached the ſame doc-
'trine in the ſame general terms in which he found it de-
'livered by the apoſtles of Chriſt, as taught by the homilies,
'and the reverend fathers of our church, and, in imitation
'of thoſe great examples, had only preſſed the general duty
'of obedience, and the illegality of reſiſtance, without taking
'notice of any exception.'

* * * * * * * * * * *

Another

Another of the managers for the houſe of commons, Sir John Holland, was not leſs careful in guarding againſt a confuſion of the principles of the revolution, with any looſe general doctrines of a right in the individual, or even in the people, to undertake for themſelves, on any prevalent temporary opinions of convenience or improvement, any fundamental change in the conſtitution, or to fabricate a new government for themſelves, and thereby to diſturb the public peace, and to unſettle the antient conſtitution of this kingdom.

SIR JOHN HOLLAND.

'The commons would not be underſtood, as if they were 'pleading for a licentious reſiſtance; as if *ſubjects* were left 'to *their* good-will and pleaſure, when they are to *obey*, and 'when to *reſiſt*. No, my lords, they know they are *obliged* '*by all the ties of ſocial creatures and Chriſtians, for wrath* '*and conſcience ſake, to ſubmit to their ſovereign*. The com-'mons do not abet *humourſome factious arms*: they aver 'them to be *rebellious*. But yet they maintain, that that 'reſiſtance at the revolution, which was ſo *neceſſary, was* '*lawful and juſt from that neceſſity*.

Submiſſion to the ſovereign a conſcientious duty, except in caſes of neceſſity.

'Theſe general rules of obedience may, upon a *real neceſ-'ſity*, admit a lawful *exception*; and ſuch a *neceſſary excep-'tion* we aſſert the revolution to be.

'Tis with this view of *neceſſity* only, *abſolute neceſſity* of 'preſerving our laws, liberties, and religion; 'tis with *this* '*limitation* that we deſire to be underſtood, when any of us 'ſpeak of reſiſtance in general. The *neceſſity* of the reſiſt-'ance at the revolution, was at that time obvious to every 'man.'

Right of reſiſtance how to be underſtood.

* I ſhall

* * * * * * * * * * *

I ſhall conclude theſe extracts with a reference to the prince of Orange's declaration, in which he gives the nation the fulleſt aſſurance that in his enterprize he was far from the intention of introducing any change whatever in the fundamental law and conſtitution of the ſtate. He conſidered the object of his enterprize, not to be a precedent for further revolutions, but that it was the great end of his expedition to make ſuch revolutions ſo far as human power and wiſdom could provide, unneceſſary.

Extracts from the Prince of Orange's Declaration.

'*All magiſtrates, who have been* unjuſtly turned out, ſhall '*forthwith reſume their former* employments, as well as all 'the boroughs of England ſhall return again to *their antient* '*preſcriptions and charters:* and more particularly, that *the* '*antient* charter of the great and famous city of London 'ſhall be again in force. And that the writs for the mem-'bers of parliament ſhall be addreſſed to the *proper officers,* '*according to law and cuſtom.*' — — —

'And for the doing of all other things, which the two houſes 'of parliament ſhall find neceſſary for the peace, honour, 'and ſafety of the nation, ſo that there may *be no danger of* '*the nation's falling, at any time hereafter, under arbitrary* '*government.*'

Extract from the Prince of Orange's additional Declaration.

'We are confident that no perſons can have *ſuch hard* '*thoughts of us,* as to imagine that we have any other deſign

'in this undertaking, than to procure a ſettlement of the 'religion, *and of the liberties and properties of the ſubjects*, 'upon ſo ſure a foundation, *that there may be no danger of the* 'nation's relapſing into the like miſeries at any time hereafter. 'And, as the forces that we have brought along with us are 'utterly diſproportioned to that wicked deſign of conquer- 'ing the nation, if we were capable of intending it; *ſo the* 'great numbers of the principal nobility and gentry, *that are* 'men of eminent quality and eſtates, *and perſons of known in-* 'tegrity and zeal, *both for the religion and government of* 'England, *many of them alſo being diſtinguiſhed by their con-* 'ſtant fidelity to the crown, who do both accompany us in 'this expedition, and have earneſtly ſolicited us to it, will 'cover us from all ſuch malicious inſinuations.'

Principal nobility and gentry well affected to the church and crown, ſecurity againſt the deſign of innovation.

In the ſpirit, and upon one occaſion in the words *, of this declaration, the ſtatutes paſſed in that reign made ſuch proviſions for preventing theſe dangers, that ſcarcely any thing ſhort of combination of king, lords, and commons for the deſtruction of the liberties of the nation, can in any probability make us liable to ſimilar perils. In that dreadful, and, I hope, not to be looked for caſe, any opinion of a right to make revolutions, grounded on this precedent, would be but a poor reſource.—Dreadful indeed would be our ſituation.

Theſe are the doctrines held by *the whigs of the revolution*, delivered with as much ſolemnity, and as authentically at leaſt, as any political dogmas were ever promulgated from the beginning of the world. If there be any difference between their tenets and thoſe of Mr. Burke it is, that the old whigs oppoſe themſelves ſtill more ſtrongly than he does againſt the doctrines which are now propagated with ſo

* Declaration of Right.

much induſtry by thoſe who would be thought their ſucceſſors.

It will be ſaid perhaps, that the old whigs, in order to guard themſelves againſt popular odium, pretended to aſſert tenets contrary to thoſe which they ſecretly held. This, if true, would prove, what Mr. Burke has uniformly aſſerted, that the extravagant doctrines which he meant to expoſe, were diſagreeable to the body of the people; who, though they perfectly abhor a deſpotic government, certainly approach more nearly to the love of mitigated monarchy, than to any thing which bears the appearance even of the beſt republic. But if theſe old whigs deceived the people, their conduct was unaccountable indeed. They expoſed their power, as every one converſant in hiſtory knows, to the greateſt peril, for the propagation of opinions which, on this hypotheſis, they did not hold. It is a new kind of martyrdom. This ſuppoſition does as little credit to their integrity as their wiſdom: it makes them at once hypocrites and fools. I think of thoſe great men very differently. I hold them to have been, what the world thought them, men of deep underſtanding, open ſincerity, and clear honour. However, be that matter as it may; what theſe old whigs pretended to be, Mr. Burke is. This is enough for him.

I do indeed admit, that though Mr. Burke has proved that his opinions were thoſe of the old whig party, ſolemnly declared by one houſe, in effect and ſubſtance by both houſes of parliament, this teſtimony ſtanding by itſelf will form no proper defence for his opinions, if he and the old whigs were both of them in the wrong. But it is his preſent concern, not to vindicate theſe old whigs, but to ſhew his agreement with them.—He appeals to them as judges: he does not vindicate them as culprits. It is current that theſe old politicians knew little of the rights of men; that they

loſt

loſt their way by groping about in the dark, and fumbling among rotten parchments and muſty records. Great lights they ſay are lately obtained in the world; and Mr. Burke, inſtead of ſhrowding himſelf in exploded ignorance, ought to have taken advantage of the blaze of illumination which has been ſpread about him. It may be ſo. The enthuſiaſts of this time, it ſeems, like their predeceſſors in another faction of fanaticiſm, deal in lights.—Hudibras pleaſantly ſays of them, they

" *Have* lights, *where better eyes are blind,*
" *As pigs are ſaid to ſee the wind.*"

The author of the Reflections has *heard* a great deal concerning the modern lights; but he has not yet had the good fortune to *ſee* much of them. He has read more than he can juſtify to any thing but the ſpirit of curioſity, of the works of theſe illuminators of the world. He has learned nothing from the far greater number of them, than a full certainty of their ſhallowneſs, levity, pride, petulance, preſumption, and ignorance. Where the old authors whom he has read, and the old men whom he has converſed with, have left him in the dark, he is in the dark ſtill. If others, however, have obtained any of this extraordinary light, they will uſe it to guide them in their reſearches and their conduct. I have only to wiſh, that the nation may be as happy and as proſperous under the influence of the new light, as it has been in the ſober ſhade of the old obſcurity. As to the reſt, it will be difficult for the author of the Reflections to conform to the principles of the avowed leaders of the party, until they appear otherwiſe than negatively. All we can gather from them is this, that their principles are diametrically oppoſite to his. This is all that we know from

authority. Their negative declaration obliges me to have recourſe to the books which contain poſitive doctrines. They are indeed, to thoſe Mr. Burke holds, diametrically oppoſite; and if it be true, (as the oracles of the party have ſaid, I hope haſtily) that their opinions differ ſo widely, it ſhould ſeem they are the moſt likely to form the creed of the modern whigs.

I have ſtated what were the avowed ſentiments of the old whigs, not in the way of argument, but narratively. It is but fair to ſet before the reader, in the ſame ſimple manner, the ſentiments of the modern, to which they ſpare neither pains nor expence to make proſelytes. I chooſe them from the books upon which moſt of that induſtry and expenditure in circulation have been employed; I chooſe them not from thoſe who ſpeak with a politic obſcurity; not from thoſe who only controvert the opinions of the old whigs, without advancing any of their own, but from thoſe who ſpeak plainly and affirmatively. The whig reader may make his choice between the two doctrines.

The doctrine then propagated by theſe ſocieties, which gentlemen think they ought to be very tender in diſcouraging, as nearly as poſſible in their own words, is as follows: that in Great Britain we are not only without a good conſtitution, but that we have "no conſtitution." That, "tho' "it is much talked about, no ſuch thing as a conſtitution "exiſts, or ever did exiſt; and conſequently that *the people* "*have a conſtitution yet to form*; that ſince William the "Conqueror, the country has never yet *regenerated itſelf*; "and is therefore without a conſtitution. That where it "cannot be produced in a viſible form, there is none. "That a conſtitution is a thing antecedent to government; "and that the conſtitution of a country is not the act of its "government, but of a people conſtituting a government."

"That

"That *every thing* in the Engliſh government is the reverſe "of what it ought to be, and what it is ſaid to be in Eng- "land. That the right of war and peace reſides in a meta- "phor ſhewn at the Tower, for ſix pence or a ſhilling a- "piece.—That it ſignifies not where the right reſides, whe- "ther in the crown or in parliament. War is the common "harveſt of thoſe who participate in the diviſion and ex- "penditure of public money. That the portion of liberty "enjoyed in England is juſt enough to enſlave a country "more productively than by deſpotiſm."

So far as to the general ſtate of the Britiſh conſtitution.—As to our houſe of lords, the chief virtual repreſentative of our ariſtocracy, the great ground and pillar of ſecurity to the landed intereſt, and that main link by which it is connected with the law and the crown, theſe worthy ſocieties are pleaſed to tell us, that, "whether we view ariſtocracy be- "fore, or behind, or ſide-ways, or any way elſe, domeſti- "cally or publicly, it is ſtill a *monſter*. That ariſtocracy in "France had one feature leſs in its countenance than what "it has in ſome other countries; it did not compoſe a body "of hereditary legiſlators. It was not a corporation of ariſ- "tocracy;"—for ſuch it ſeems that profound legiſlator Mr. De la Fayette deſcribes the houſe of peers. "That it is "kept up by family tyranny and injuſtice—that there is an "unnatural unfitneſs in ariſtocracy to be legiſlators for a "nation—that their ideas of diſtributive juſtice are corrupted "at the very ſource; they begin life by trampling on all "their younger brothers, and ſiſters, and relations of every "kind, and are taught and educated ſo to do.—That the "idea of an hereditary legiſlator is as abſurd as an heredi- "tary mathematician. That a body holding themſelves "unaccountable to any body, ought to be truſted by no "body—that it is continuing the uncivilized principles of

"governments

" governments founded in conqueſt, and the baſe idea of " man having a property in man, and governing him by a " perſonal right—that ariſtocracy has a tendency to dege- " nerate the human ſpecies," &c. &c.

As to our law of primogeniture, which with few and inconſiderable exceptions is the ſtanding law of all our landed inheritance, and which without queſtion has a tendency, and I think a moſt happy tendency, to preſerve a character of conſequence, weight, and prevalent influence over others in the whole body of the landed intereſt, they call loudly for its deſtruction. They do this for political reaſons that are very manifeſt. They have the confidence to ſay, " that " it is a law againſt every law of nature, and nature herſelf " calls for its deſtruction. Eſtabliſh family juſtice, and " ariſtocracy falls. By the ariſtocratical law of primogeni- " tureſhip, in a family of ſix children, five are expoſed. " Ariſtocracy has never but *one* child. The reſt are be- " gotten to be devoured. They are thrown to the cannibal " for prey, and the natural parent prepares the unnatural " repaſt."

As to the houſe of commons, they treat it far worſe than the houſe of lords or the crown have been ever treated. Perhaps they thought they had a greater right to take this amicable freedom with thoſe of their own family. For many years it has been the perpetual theme of their invectives.—" Mockery, inſult, uſurpation," are amongſt the beſt names they beſtow upon it. They damn it in the maſs, by declaring " that it does not ariſe out of the inherent rights " of the people, as the national aſſembly does in France, " and whoſe name deſignates its original."

Of the charters and corporations, to whoſe rights, a few years ago, theſe gentlemen were ſo tremblingly alive, they ſay, " that when the people of England come to reflect upon

" them, they will, like France, annihilate thoſe badges of " oppreſſion, thoſe traces of a conquered nation."

As to our monarchy, they had formerly been more tender of that branch of the conſtitution, and for a good reaſon. The laws had guarded againſt all ſeditious attacks upon it, with a greater degree of ſtrictneſs and ſeverity. The tone of theſe gentlemen is totally altered ſince the French revolution. They now declaim as vehemently againſt the monarchy, as in former occaſions they treacherouſly flattered and ſoothed it.

" When we ſurvey the wretched condition of man under " the monarchical and hereditary ſyſtems of government, " dragged from his home by one power, or driven by an- " other, and impoveriſhed by taxes more than by enemies, " it becomes evident that thoſe ſyſtems are bad, and that a " general revolution in the principle and conſtruction of " governments is neceſſary.

" What is government more than the management of the " affairs of a nation? It is not, and from its nature cannot " be, the property of any particular man or family, but of " the whole community, at whoſe expence it is ſupported; " and though by force or contrivance it has been uſurped " into an inheritance, the uſurpation cannot alter the right " of things. Sovereignty, as a matter of right, appertains " to the nation only, and not to any individual; and a na- " tion has at all times an inherent indefeaſible right to " aboliſh any form of government it finds inconvenient, " and eſtabliſh ſuch as accords with its intereſt, diſpoſition, " and happineſs. The romantic and barbarous diſtinction " of men into kings and ſubjects, though it may ſuit the " condition of courtiers, cannot that of citizens; and is " exploded by the principle upon which governments are " now founded. Every citizen is a member of the ſove-

" reignty,

" reignty, and, as ſuch, can acknowledge no perſonal ſub-
" jection; and his obedience can be only to the laws."

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Warmly recommending to us the example of France, where they have deſtroyed monarchy, they ſay—

" Monarchical ſovereignty, the enemy of mankind, and
" the ſource of miſery, is aboliſhed; and ſovereignty itſelf
" is reſtored to its natural and original place, the nation.
" Were this the caſe throughout Europe, the cauſe of wars
" would be taken away."

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" But, after all, what is this metaphor called a crown, or
" rather what is monarchy? Is it a thing, or is it a name,
" or is it a fraud? Is it 'a contrivance of human wiſdom,'
" or of human craft to obtain money from a nation under
" ſpecious pretences? Is it a thing neceſſary to a nation?
" If it is, in what does that neceſſity conſiſt, what ſervices
" does it perform, what is its buſineſs, and what are its
" merits? Doth the virtue conſiſt in the metaphor, or in
" the man? Doth the goldſmith that makes the crown
" make the virtue alſo? Doth it operate like Fortunatus's
" wiſhing-cap, or Harlequin's wooden ſword? Doth it make
" a man a conjuror? In fine, what is it? It appears to be
" a ſomething going much out of faſhion, falling into ridi-
" cule, and rejected in ſome countries both as unneceſſary
" and expenſive. In America it is conſidered as an abſur-
" dity; and in France it has ſo far declined, that the good-
" neſs of the man, and the reſpect for his perſonal cha-
" racter, are the only things that preſerve the appearance of
" its exiſtence."

" Mr.

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"Mr. Burke talks about what he calls an hereditary "crown, as if it were ſome production of Nature; or as if, "like Time, it had a power to operate, not only indepen- "dently, but in ſpite of man; or as if it were a thing or a "ſubject univerſally conſented to. Alas! it has none of "thoſe properties, but is the reverſe of them all. It is a "thing in imagination, the propriety of which is more than "doubted, and the legality of which in a few years will be "denied."

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"If I aſk the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, "the tradeſman, and down through all the occupations of "life to the common labourer, what ſervice monarchy is to "him? he can give me no anſwer. If I aſk him what mo- "narchy is, he believes it is ſomething like a ſinecure.

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"The French conſtitution ſays, That the right of war and "peace is in the nation. Where elſe ſhould it reſide, but in "thoſe who are to pay the expence?

"In England, this right is ſaid to reſide in a *metaphor*, "ſhewn at the Tower for ſix pence or a ſhilling a-piece: ſo "are the lions; and it would be a ſtep nearer to reaſon to "ſay it reſided in them, for any inanimate metaphor is no "more than a hat or a cap. We can all ſee the abſurdity of "worſhipping Aaron's molten calf, or Nebuchadnezzar's "golden image; but why do men continue to practiſe "themſelves the abſurdities they deſpiſe in others?"

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The revolution and Hanover ſucceſſion had been objects of the higheſt veneration to the old whigs. They thought them not only proofs of the ſober and ſteady ſpirit of liberty which guided their anceſtors; but of their wiſdom and provident care of poſterity.—The modern whigs have quite other notions of theſe events and actions. They do not deny that Mr. Burke has given truly the words of the acts of parliament which ſecured the ſucceſſion, and the juſt ſenſe of them. They attack not him but the law.

" Mr. Burke (ſay they) has done ſome ſervice, not to his " cauſe, but to his country, by bringing thoſe clauſes into " public view. They ſerve to demonſtrate how neceſſary it " is at all times to watch againſt the attempted encroach- " ment of power, and to prevent its running to exceſs. It " is ſomewhat extraordinary, that the offence for which " James II. was expelled, that of ſetting up power by *aſ-* " *ſumption*, ſhould be re-acted, under another ſhape and " form, by the parliament that expelled him. It ſhews that " the rights of man were but imperfectly underſtood at the " revolution; for, certain it is, that the right which that " parliament ſet up by *aſſumption* (for by delegation it had " it not, and could not have it, becauſe none could give it) " over the perſons and freedom of poſterity for ever, was of " the ſame tyrannical unfounded kind which James at- " tempted to ſet up over the parliament and the nation, and " for which he was expelled. The only difference is, (for " in principle they differ not), that the one was an uſurper " over the living, and the other over the unborn; and as " the one has no better authority to ſtand upon than the " other, both of them muſt be equally null and void, and of " no effect."

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" As

" As the eſtimation of all things is by compariſon, the re-
" volution of 1688, however from circumſtances it may have
" been exalted beyond its value, will find its level. It is
" already on the wane; eclipſed by the enlarging orb of
" reaſon, and the luminous revolutions of America and
" France. In leſs than another century, it will go, as well
" as Mr. Burke's labours, 'to the family vault of all the
" Capulets.' *Mankind will then ſcarcely believe that a coun-*
" *try calling itſelf free, would ſend to Holland for a man, and*
" *clothe him with power, on purpoſe to put themſelves in fear*
" *of him, and give him almoſt a million ſterling a-year for*
" *leave to ſubmit themſelves and their poſterity, like bond-men*
" *and bond-women, for ever.*"

" Mr. Burke having ſaid that the king holds his crown in
" contempt of the choice of the revolution ſociety, who in-
" dividually or collectively have not" (as moſt certainly they have not) " a vote for a king amongſt them, they take
" occaſion from thence to infer, that a king who does not
" hold his crown by election, deſpiſes the people."

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" The king of England," ſays he, " holds *his* crown (for
" it does not belong to the nation according to Mr. Burke)
" in *contempt* of the choice of the Revolution Society," &c.

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" As to who is king in England or elſewhere, or whether
" there is any king at all, or whether the people chuſe a
" Cherokee chief, or a Heſſian huſſar for a king, it is not a
" matter that I trouble myſelf about—be that to themſelves;
" but with reſpect to the doctrine, ſo far as it relates to the

" rights of men and nations, it is as abominable as any thing " ever uttered in the moſt enſlaved country under heaven. " Whether it ſounds worſe to my ear, by not being accuſ- " tomed to hear ſuch deſpotiſm, than what it does to the ear " of another perſon, I am not ſo well a judge of; but of its " abominable principle I am at no loſs to judge."

Theſe ſocieties of modern whigs puſh their inſolence as far as it can go. In order to prepare the minds of the people for treaſon and rebellion, they repreſent the king as tainted with principles of deſpotiſm, from the circumſtance of his having dominions in Germany. In direct defiance of the moſt notorious truth, they deſcribe his government there to be a deſpotiſm; whereas it is a free conſtitution, in which the ſtates of the electorate have their part in the government; and this privilege has never been infringed by the king, or, that I have heard of, by any of his predeceſſors. The conſtitution of the electoral dominions has indeed a double control, both from the laws of the empire, and from the privileges of the country. Whatever rights the king enjoys as elector, have been always parentally exerciſed, and the calumnies of theſe ſcandalous ſocieties have not been authorized by a ſingle complaint of oppreſſion.

" When Mr. Burke ſays that ' his majeſty's heirs and ſuc- " ceſſors, each in their time and order, will come to the " crown with the *ſame contempt* of their choice with which " his majeſty has ſucceeded to that he wears,' it is ſaying " too much even to the humbleſt individual in the country; " part of whoſe daily labour goes towards making up the " million ſterling a year, which the country gives the per- " ſon it ſtiles a king. Government with inſolence, is de- " ſpotiſm; but when contempt is added, it becomes worſe; " and to pay for contempt, is the exceſs of ſlavery. This " ſpecies of government comes from Germany; and re-

" minds

" minds me of what one of the Brunſwick ſoldiers told me, " who was taken priſoner by the Americans in the late " war: ' Ah!' ſaid he, ' America is a fine free country, it " is worth the people's fighting for; I know the difference " by knowing my own: in my country, *if the prince ſays, " Eat ſtraw, we eat ſtraw.*' God help that country, thought " I, be it England or elſewhere, whoſe liberties are to be " protected by *German principles of government, and princes " of Brunſwick!*"

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" It is ſomewhat curious to obſerve, that although the " people of England have been in the habit of talking about " kings, it is always a foreign houſe of kings; hating fo- " reigners, yet governed by them.—It is now the houſe of " Brunſwick, one of the petty tribes of Germany." - -

" If government be what Mr. Burke deſcribes it, ' a con- " trivance of human wiſdom,' I might aſk him, if wiſdom " was at ſuch a low ebb in England, that it was become ne- " ceſſary to import it from Holland and from Hanover? But " I will do the country the juſtice to ſay, that was not the " caſe; and even if it was, it miſtook the cargo. The wiſ- " dom of every country, when properly exerted, is ſufficient " for all its purpoſes; *and there could exiſt no more real oc- " caſion in England to have ſent for a Dutch Stadtholder, or " a German Elector, than* there was in America to have done " a ſimilar thing. If a country does not underſtand its own " affairs, how is a foreigner to underſtand them, who knows " neither its laws, its manners, nor its language? If there " exiſted a man ſo tranſcendently wiſe above all others, that " his wiſdom was neceſſary to inſtruct a nation, ſome reaſon

" might

" might be offered for monarchy; but when we caſt our " eyes about a country, and obſerve how every part under- " ſtands its own affairs; and when we look around the " world, and ſee that of all men in it, the race of kings are " the moſt inſignificant in capacity, our reaſon cannot fail " to aſk us—What are thoſe men kept for?" *

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Theſe are the notions which, under the idea of whig principles, ſeveral perſons, and among them perſons of no mean mark, have aſſociated themſelves to propagate. I will not attempt in the ſmalleſt degree to refute them. This will probably be done (if ſuch writings ſhall be thought to deſerve any other than the refutation of criminal juſtice) by others, who may think with Mr. Burke. He has performed his part.

I do not wiſh to enter very much at large into the diſcuſſions which diverge and ramify in all ways from this productive ſubject. But there is one topic upon which I hope I ſhall be excuſed in going a little beyond my deſign. The factions, now ſo buſy amongſt us, in order to diveſt men of all love for their country, and to remove from their minds all duty with regard to the ſtate, endeavour to propagate an opinion, that the *people*, in forming their commonwealth, have by no means parted with their power over it. This is an impregnable citadel, to which theſe gentlemen retreat whenever they are puſhed by the battery of laws, and uſages, and poſitive conventions. Indeed it is ſuch and of ſo great force, that all they have done in defending their outworks is ſo much time and labour thrown away. Diſcuſs any of their ſchemes—their anſwer is—It is the act of the *people*,

* Vindication of the Rights of Man, recommended by the ſeveral ſocieties.

and

and that is ſufficient. Are we to deny to a *majority* of the people the right of altering even the whole frame of their ſociety, if ſuch ſhould be their pleaſure? They may change it, ſay they, from a monarchy to a republic to-day, and to-morrow back again from a republic to a monarchy; and ſo backward and forward as often as they like. They are maſters of the commonwealth; becauſe in ſubſtance they are themſelves the commonwealth. The French revolution, ſay they, was the act of the majority of the people; and if the majority of any other people, the people of England for inſtance, wiſh to make the ſame change, they have the ſame right.

Juſt the ſame undoubtedly. That is, none at all. Neither the few nor the many have a right to act merely by their will, in any matter connected with duty, truſt, engagement, or obligation. The conſtitution of a country being once ſettled upon ſome compact, tacit or expreſſed, there is no power exiſting of force to alter it, without the breach of the covenant, or the conſent of all the parties. Such is the nature of a contract. And the votes of a majority of the people, whatever their infamous flatterers may teach in order to corrupt their minds, cannot alter the moral any more than they can alter the phyſical eſſence of things. The people are not to be taught to think lightly of their engagements to their governors; elſe they teach governors to think lightly of their engagements towards them. In that kind of game in the end the people are ſure to be loſers. To flatter them into a contempt of faith, truth, and juſtice, is to ruin them; for in theſe virtues conſiſts their whole ſafety. To flatter any man, or any part of mankind, in any deſcription, by aſſerting, that in engagements he or they are free whilſt any other human creature is bound, is ultimately to veſt the rule of morality in the pleaſure of thoſe who ought to be

rigidly ſubmitted to it; to ſubject the ſovereign reaſon of the world to the caprices of weak and giddy men.

But, as no one of us men can diſpenſe with public or private faith, or with any other tie of moral obligation, ſo neither can any number of us. The number engaged in crimes, inſtead of turning them into laudable acts, only augments the quantity and intenſity of the guilt. I am well aware, that men love to hear of their power, but to have an extreme diſreliſh to be told of their duty. This is of courſe; becauſe every duty is a limitation of ſome power. Indeed arbitrary power is ſo much to the depraved taſte of the vulgar, of the vulgar of every deſcription, that almoſt all the diſſenſions which lacerate the commonwealth, are not concerning the manner in which it is to be exerciſed, but concerning the hands in which it is to be placed. Somewhere they are reſolved to have it. Whether they deſire it to be veſted in the many or the few, depends with moſt men upon the chance which they imagine they themſelves may have of partaking in the exerciſe of that arbitrary ſway, in the one mode or in the other.

It is not neceſſary to teach men to thirſt after power. But it is very expedient that, by moral inſtruction, they ſhould be taught, and by their civil conſtitutions they ſhould be compelled, to put many reſtrictions upon the immoderate exerciſe of it, and the inordinate deſire. The beſt method of obtaining theſe two great points forms the important, but at the ſame time the difficult problem to the true ſtateſman. He thinks of the place in which political power is to be lodged, with no other attention, than as it may render the more or the leſs practicable, its ſalutary reſtraint, and its prudent direction. For this reaſon no legiſlator, at any period of the world, has willingly placed the ſeat of active power in the hands of the multitude: becauſe there it ad-

mits of no control, no regulation, no ſteady direction whatſoever. The people are the natural control on authority; but to exerciſe and to control together is contradictory and impoſſible.

As the exorbitant exerciſe of power cannot, under popular ſway, be effectually reſtrained, the other great object of political arrangement, the means of abating an exceſſive deſire of it, is in ſuch a ſtate ſtill worſe provided for. The democratic commonwealth is the foodful nurſe of ambition. Under the other forms it meets with many reſtraints. Whenever, in ſtates which have had a democratic baſis, the legiſlators have endeavoured to put reſtraints upon ambition, their methods were as violent, as in the end they were ineffectual; as violent indeed as any the moſt jealous deſpotiſm could invent. The oſtraciſm could not very long ſave itſelf, and much leſs the ſtate which it was meant to guard, from the attempts of ambition, one of the natural inbred incurable diſtempers of a powerful democracy.

But to return from this ſhort digreſſion, which however is not wholly foreign to the queſtion of the effect of the will of the majority upon the form or the exiſtence of their ſociety. I cannot too often recommend it to the ſerious conſideration of all men, who think civil ſociety to be within the province of moral juriſdiction, that if we owe to it any duty, it is not ſubject to our will. Duties are not voluntary. Duty and will are even contradictory terms. Now though civil ſociety might be at firſt a voluntary act (which in many caſes it undoubtedly was) its continuance is under a permanent ſtanding covenant, coexiſting with the ſociety; and it attaches upon every individual of that ſociety, without any formal act of his own. This is warranted by the general practice, ariſing out of the general ſenſe of mankind. Men without their choice derive benefits from that aſſociation; without

their choice they are ſubjected to duties in conſequence of theſe benefits; and without their choice they enter into a virtual obligation as binding as any that is actual. Look through the whole of life and the whole ſyſtem of duties. Much the ſtrongeſt moral obligations are ſuch as were never the reſults of our option. I allow, that if no ſupreme ruler exiſts, wiſe to form, and potent to enforce, the moral law, there is no ſanction to any contract, virtual or even actual, againſt the will of prevalent power. On that hypotheſis, let any ſet of men be ſtrong enough to ſet their duties at defiance, and they ceaſe to be duties any longer. We have but this one appeal againſt irreſiſtible power—

Si genus humanum et mortalia temnitis arma,
At ſperate Deos memores fandi atque nefandi.

Taking it for granted that I do not write to the diſciples of the Pariſian philoſophy, I may aſſume, that the awful author of our being is the author of our place in the order of exiſtence; and that having diſpoſed and marſhalled us by a divine tactick, not according to our will, but according to his, he has, in and by that diſpoſition, virtually ſubjected us to act the part which belongs to the place aſſigned us. We have obligations to mankind at large, which are not in conſequence of any ſpecial voluntary pact. They ariſe from the relation of man to man, and the relation of man to God, which relations are not matters of choice. On the contrary, the force of all the pacts which we enter into with any particular perſon or number of perſons amongſt mankind, depends upon thoſe prior obligations. In ſome caſes the ſubordinate relations are voluntary, in others they are neceſſary —but the duties are all compulſive. When we marry, the choice is voluntary, but the duties are not matter of choice. They are dictated by the nature of the ſituation. Dark and inſcrutable

inſcrutable are the ways by which we come into the world. The inſtincts which give riſe to this myſterious proceſs of nature are not of our making. But out of phyſical cauſes, unknown to us, perhaps unknowable, ariſe moral duties, which, as we are able perfectly to comprehend, we are bound indiſpenſably to perform. Parents may not be conſenting to their moral relation; but conſenting or not, they are bound to a long train of burthenſome duties towards thoſe with whom they have never made a convention of any ſort. Children are not conſenting to their relation, but their relation, without their actual conſent, binds them to its duties; or rather it implies their conſent, becauſe the preſumed conſent of every rational creature is in uniſon with the prediſpoſed order of things. Men come in that manner into a community with the ſocial ſtate of their parents, endowed with all the benefits, loaded with all the duties of their ſituation. If the ſocial ties and ligaments, ſpun out of thoſe phyſical relations which are the elements of the commonwealth, in moſt caſes begin, and always continue, independently of our will, ſo without any ſtipulation, on our part, are we bound by that relation called our country, which comprehends (as it has been well ſaid) " *all the " charities of all." Nor are we left without powerful inſtincts to make this duty as dear and grateful to us, as it is awful and coercive. Our country is not a thing of mere phyſical locality. It conſiſts, in a great meaſure, in the antient order into which we are born. We may have the ſame geographical ſituation, but another country; as we may have the ſame country in another ſoil. The place that determines our duty to our country is a ſocial, civil relation.

Theſe are the opinions of the author whoſe cauſe I defend. I lay them down not to enforce them upon others by diſpu-

* Omnes omnium charitates patria una complectitur. Cic.

their choice they are ſubjected to duties in conſequence of theſe benefits; and without their choice they enter into a virtual obligation as binding as any that is actual. Look through the whole of life and the whole ſyſtem of duties. Much the ſtrongeſt moral obligations are ſuch as were never the reſults of our option. I allow, that if no ſupreme ruler exiſts, wiſe to form, and potent to enforce, the moral law, there is no ſanction to any contract, virtual or even actual, againſt the will of prevalent power. On that hypotheſis, let any ſet of men be ſtrong enough to ſet their duties at defiance, and they ceaſe to be duties any longer. We have but this one appeal againſt irreſiſtible power—

Si genus humanum et mortalia temnitis arma,
At ſperate Deos memores fandi atque nefandi.

Taking it for granted that I do not write to the diſciples of the Pariſian philoſophy, I may aſſume, that the awful author of our being is the author of our place in the order of exiſtence; and that having diſpoſed and marſhalled us by a divine tactick, not according to our will, but according to his, he has, in and by that diſpoſition, virtually ſubjected us to act the part which belongs to the place aſſigned us. We have obligations to mankind at large, which are not in conſequence of any ſpecial voluntary pact. They ariſe from the relation of man to man, and the relation of man to God, which relations are not matters of choice. On the contrary, the force of all the pacts which we enter into with any particular perſon or number of perſons amongſt mankind, depends upon thoſe prior obligations. In ſome caſes the ſubordinate relations are voluntary, in others they are neceſſary —but the duties are all compulſive. When we marry, the choice is voluntary, but the duties are not matter of choice. They are dictated by the nature of the ſituation. Dark and inſcrutable

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Theſe are the opinions of the author whoſe cauſe I defend. I lay them down not to enforce them upon others by diſpu-

* Omnes omnium charitates patria una complectitur. Cic.

tation, but as an account of his proceedings. On them he acts; and from them he is convinced that neither he, nor any man, or number of men, have a right (except what neceſſity, which is out of and above all rule, rather impoſes than beſtows) to free themſelves from that primary engagement into which every man born into a community as much contracts by his being born into it, as he contracts an obligation to certain parents by his having been derived from their bodies. The place of every man determines his duty. If you aſk, *Quem te Deus eſſe juſſit?* You will be anſwered when you reſolve this other queſtion, *Humana qua parte locatus es in re* ?*

I admit, indeed, that in morals, as in all things elſe, difficulties will ſometimes occur. Duties will ſometimes croſs one another. Then queſtions will ariſe, which of them is to be placed in ſubordination; which of them may be entirely ſuperſeded? Theſe doubts give riſe to that part of moral ſcience called *caſuiſtry*; which, though neceſſary to be well ſtudied by thoſe who would become expert in that learning, who aim at becoming what, I think Cicero ſomewhere calls, *artifices officiorum*; it requires a very ſolid and diſcriminating judgment, great modeſty and caution, and much ſobriety of mind in the handling; elſe there is a danger that it may totally ſubvert thoſe offices which it is its object only to methodize and reconcile. Duties, at their extreme bounds, are

* A few lines in Perſius contain a good ſummary of all the objects of moral inveſtigation, and hint the reſult of our enquiry: There human will has no place.

Quid *ſumus?* et quidnam *victuri gignimur?* ordo
Quis *datus?* et *metæ* quis mollis flexus et unde?
Quis modus argento? Quid *fas optare?* Quid aſper
Utile nummus habet? *Patriæ chariſque propinquis*
Quantum elargiri *debeat?*—Quem te Deus eſſe
Juſſit?—et humana qua parte *locatus es* in re?

drawn

drawn very fine, ſo as to become almoſt evaneſcent. In that ſtate, ſome ſhade of doubt will always reſt on theſe queſtions, when they are purſued with great ſubtilty. But the very habit of ſtating theſe extreme caſes is not very laudable or ſafe: becauſe, in general, it is not right to turn our duties into doubts. They are impoſed to govern our conduct, not to exerciſe our ingenuity; and therefore, our opinions about them ought not to be in a ſtate of fluctuation, but ſteady, ſure, and reſolved.

Amongſt theſe nice, and therefore dangerous, points of caſuiſtry may be reckoned the queſtion ſo much agitated in the preſent hour—Whether, after the people have diſcharged themſelves of their original power by an habitual delegation, no occaſion can poſſibly occur which may juſtify their reſumption of it? This queſtion, in this latitude, is very hard to affirm or deny: but I am ſatisfied that no occaſion can juſtify ſuch a reſumption, which would not equally authorize a diſpenſation with any other moral duty, perhaps with all of them together. However, if in general it be not eaſy to determine concerning the lawfulneſs of ſuch devious proceedings, which muſt be ever on the edge of crimes, it is far from difficult to foreſee the perilous conſequences of the reſuſcitation of ſuch a power in the people. The practical conſequences of any political tenet go a great way in deciding upon its value. Political problems do not primarily concern truth or falſehood. They relate to good or evil. What in the reſult is likely to produce evil, is politically falſe: that which is productive of good, politically is true.

Believing it therefore a queſtion at leaſt arduous in the theory, and in the practice very critical, it would become us to aſcertain, as well as we can, what form it is that our incantations are about to call up from darkneſs and the ſleep

of

of ages. When the ſupreme authority of the people is in queſtion, before we attempt to extend or to confine it, we ought to fix in our minds, with ſome degree of diſtinctneſs, an idea of what it is we mean when we ſay the PEOPLE.

In a ſtate of *rude* nature there is no ſuch thing as a people. A number of men in themſelves have no collective capacity. The idea of a people is the idea of a corporation. It is wholly artificial; and made like all other legal fictions by common agreement. What the particular nature of that agreement was, is collected from the form into which the particular ſociety has been caſt. Any other is not *their* covenant. When men, therefore, break up the original compact or agreement which gives its corporate form and capacity to a ſtate, they are no longer a people; they have no longer a corporate exiſtence; they have no longer a legal coactive force to bind within, nor a claim to be recognized abroad. They are a number of vague looſe individuals, and nothing more. With them all is to begin again. Alas! they little know how many a weary ſtep is to be taken before they can form themſelves into a maſs, which has a true politic perſonality.

We hear much from men, who have not acquired their hardineſs of aſſertion from the profundity of their thinking, about the omnipotence of a *majority*, in ſuch a diſſolution of an antient ſociety as hath taken place in France. But amongſt men ſo diſbanded, there can be no ſuch thing as majority or minority; or power in any one perſon to bind another. The power of acting by a majority, which the gentlemen theoriſts ſeem to aſſume ſo readily, after they have violated the contract out of which it has ariſen, (if at all it exiſted) muſt be grounded on two aſſumptions; firſt, that of an incorporation produced by unanimity; and ſe-

condly, an unanimous agreement, that the act of a mere majority (ſay of one) ſhall paſs with them and with others as the act of the whole.

We are ſo little affected by things which are habitual, that we conſider this idea of the deciſion of a *majority* as if it were a law of our original nature: But ſuch conſtructive whole, reſiding in a part only, is one of the moſt violent fictions of poſitive law, that ever has been or can be made on the principles of artificial incorporation. Out of civil ſociety nature knows nothing of it; nor are men, even when arranged according to civil order, otherwiſe than by very long training, brought at all to ſubmit to it. The mind is brought far more eaſily to acquieſce in the proceedings of one man, or a few, who act under a general procuration for the ſtate, than in the vote of a victorious majority in councils in which every man has his ſhare in the deliberation. For there the beaten party are exaſperated and ſoured by the previous contention, and mortified by the concluſive defeat. This mode of deciſion, where wills may be ſo nearly equal, where, according to circumſtances, the ſmaller number may be the ſtronger force, and where apparent reaſon may be all upon one ſide, and on the other little elſe than impetuous appetite; all this muſt be the reſult of a very particular and ſpecial convention, confirmed afterwards by long habits of obedience, by a ſort of diſcipline in ſociety, and by a ſtrong hand, veſted with ſtationary permanent power, to enforce this ſort of conſtructive general will. What organ it is that ſhall declare the corporate mind is ſo much a matter of poſitive arrangement, that ſeveral ſtates, for the validity of ſeveral of their acts, have required a proportion of voices much greater than that of a mere majority. Theſe proportions are ſo entirely governed by convention, that in ſome caſes the minority decides. The laws in many countries to *condemn* require more

more than a mere majority; leſs than an equal number to *acquit*. In our judicial trials we require unanimity either to condemn or to abſolve. In ſome incorporations one man ſpeaks for the whole; in others, a few. Until the other day, in the conſtitution of Poland, unanimity was required to give validity to any act of their great national council or diet. This approaches much more nearly to rude nature than the inſtitutions of any other country. Such, indeed, every commonwealth muſt be, without a poſitive law to recognize in a certain number the will of the entire body.

If men diſſolve their antient incorporation, in order to regenerate their community, in that ſtate of things each man has a right, if he pleaſes, to remain an individual. Any number of individuals, who can agree upon it, have an undoubted right to form themſelves into a ſtate apart and wholly independent. If any of theſe is forced into the fellowſhip of another, this is conqueſt and not compact. On every principle, which ſuppoſes ſociety to be in virtue of a free covenant, this compulſive incorporation muſt be null and void.

As a people can have no right to a corporate capacity without univerſal conſent, ſo neither have they a right to hold excluſively any lands in the name and title of a corporation. On the ſcheme of the preſent rulers in our neighbouring country, regenerated as they are, they have no more right to the territory called France than I have. I have a right to pitch my tent in any unoccupied place I can find for it; and I may apply to my own maintenance any part of their unoccupied ſoil. I may purchaſe the houſe or vineyard of any individual proprietor who refuſes his conſent (and moſt proprietors have, as far as they dared, refuſed it) to the new incorporation. I ſtand in his independent place. Who are theſe inſolent men calling themſelves the French nation,

nation, that would monopolize this fair domain of nature? Is it becauſe they ſpeak a certain jargon? Is it their mode of chattering, to me unintelligible, that forms their title to my land? Who are they who claim by preſcription and deſcent from certain gangs of banditti called Franks, and Burgundians, and Viſigoths, of whom I may have never heard, and ninety-nine out of an hundred of themſelves certainly never have heard; whilſt at the very time they tell me, that preſcription and long poſſeſſion form no title to property? Who are they that preſume to aſſert that the land which I purchaſed of the individual, a natural perſon, and not a fiction of ſtate, belongs to them, who in the very capacity in which they make their claim can exiſt only as an imaginary being, and in virtue of the very preſcription which they reject and diſown? This mode of arguing might be puſhed into all the detail, ſo as to leave no ſort of doubt, that on their principles, and on the ſort of footing on which they have thought proper to place themſelves, the crowd of men, on the other ſide of the channel, who have the impudence to call themſelves a people, can never be the lawful excluſive poſſeſſors of the ſoil. By what they call reaſoning without prejudice, they leave not one ſtone upon another in the fabric of human ſociety. They ſubvert all the authority which they hold, as well as all that which they have deſtroyed.

As in the abſtract, it is perfectly clear, that, out of a ſtate of civil ſociety, majority and minority are relations which can have no exiſtence; and that in civil ſociety, its own ſpecific conventions in each incorporation, determine what it is that conſtitutes the people, ſo as to make their act the ſignification of the general will; to come to particulars, it is equally clear, that neither in France nor in England has the original, or any ſubſequent compact of the ſtate, expreſſed

or implied, conſtituted *a majority of men, told by the head*, to be the acting people of their ſeveral communities. And I ſee as little of policy or utility, as there is of right, in laying down a principle that a majority of men told by the head are to be conſidered as the people, and that as ſuch their will is to be law. What policy can there be found in arrangements made in defiance of every political principle? To enable men to act with the weight and character of a people, and to anſwer the ends for which they are incorporated into that capacity, we muſt ſuppoſe them (by means immediate or conſequential) to be in that ſtate of habitual ſocial diſcipline, in which the wiſer, the more expert, and the more opulent, conduct, and by conducting enlighten and protect the weaker, the leſs knowing, and the leſs provided with the goods of fortune. When the multitude are not under this diſcipline, they can ſcarcely be ſaid to be in civil ſociety. Give once a certain conſtitution of things, which produces a variety of conditions and circumſtances in a ſtate, and there is in nature and reaſon a principle which, for their own benefit, poſtpones, not the intereſt but the judgment, of thoſe who are *numero plures*, to thoſe who are *virtute et honore majores*. Numbers in a ſtate (ſuppoſing, which is not the caſe in France, that a ſtate does exiſt) are always of conſideration—but they are not the whole conſideration. It is in things more ſerious than a play, that it may be truly ſaid, *ſatis eſt equitem mihi plaudere*.

A true natural ariſtocracy is not a ſeparate intereſt in the ſtate, or ſeparable from it. It is an eſſential integrant part of any large people rightly conſtituted. It is formed out of a claſs of legitimate preſumptions, which, taken as generalities, muſt be admitted for actual truths. To be bred in a place of eſtimation; To ſee nothing low and ſordid from one's infancy; To be taught to reſpect one's ſelf; To be habituated to the cenſorial inſpection of the public eye; To

look early to public opinion; To ſtand upon ſuch elevated ground as to be enabled to take a large view of the wide-ſpread and infinitely diverſified combinations of men and affairs in a large ſociety; To have leiſure to read, to reflect, to converſe; To be enabled to draw the court and attention of the wiſe and learned wherever they are to be found;—To be habituated in armies to command and to obey; To be taught to deſpiſe danger in the purſuit of honour and duty; To be formed to the greateſt degree of vigilance, foreſight, and circumſpection, in a ſtate of things in which no fault is committed with impunity, and the ſlighteſt miſtakes draw on the moſt ruinous conſequences—To be led to a guarded and regulated conduct, from a ſenſe that you are conſidered as an inſtructor of your fellow-citizens in their higheſt concerns, and that you act as a reconciler between God and man—To be employed as an adminiſtrator of law and juſtice, and to be thereby amongſt the firſt benefactors to mankind—To be a profeſſor of high ſcience, or of liberal and ingenuous art—To be amongſt rich traders, who from their ſucceſs are preſumed to have ſharp and vigorous underſtandings, and to poſſeſs the virtues of diligence, order, conſtancy, and regularity, and to have cultivated an habitual regard to commutative juſtice—Theſe are the circumſtances of men, that form what I ſhould call a *natural* ariſtocracy, without which there is no nation.

The ſtate of civil ſociety, which neceſſarily generates this ariſtocracy, is a ſtate of nature; and much more truly ſo than a ſavage and incoherent mode of life. For man is by nature reaſonable; and he is never perfectly in his natural ſtate, but when he is placed where reaſon may be beſt cultivated, and moſt predominates. Art is man's nature. We are as much, at leaſt, in a ſtate of nature in formed manhood, as in immature and helpleſs infancy. Men qualified

in the manner I have juſt deſcribed, form in nature, as ſhe operates in the common modification of ſociety, the leading, guiding, and governing part. It is the ſoul to the body, without which the man does not exiſt. To give therefore no more importance, in the ſocial order, to ſuch deſcriptions of men, than that of ſo many units, is an horrible uſurpation.

When great multitudes act together, under that diſcipline of nature, I recognize the PEOPLE. I acknowledge ſomething that perhaps equals, and ought always to guide, the ſovereignty of convention. In all things the voice of this grand chorus of national harmony ought to have a mighty and deciſive influence. But when you diſturb this harmony; when you break up this beautiful order, this array of truth and nature, as well as of habit and prejudice; when you ſeparate the common ſort of men from their proper chieftains ſo as to form them into an adverſe army, I no longer know that venerable object called the people in ſuch a diſbanded race of deſerters and vagabonds. For a while they may be terrible indeed; but in ſuch a manner as wild beaſts are terrible. The mind owes to them no ſort of ſubmiſſion. They are, as they have always been reputed, rebels. They may lawfully be fought with, and brought under, whenever an advantage offers. Thoſe who attempt by outrage and violence to deprive men of any advantage which they hold under the laws, and to deſtroy the natural order of life, proclaim war againſt them.

We have read in hiſtory of that furious inſurrection of the common people in France called the *Jacquerie*; for this is not the firſt time that the people have been enlightened into treaſon, murder, and rapine. Its object was to extirpate the gentry. The *Captal de Buche*, a famous ſoldier of thoſe days, diſhonoured the name of a gentleman and of a man

by

by taking, for their cruelties, a cruel vengeance on theſe deluded wretches: it was, however, his right and his duty to make war upon them, and afterwards, in moderation, to bring them to puniſhment for their rebellion; though in the ſenſe of the French revolution, and of ſome of our clubs, they were the *people*; and were truly ſo, if you will call by that appellation *any majority of men told by the head.*

At a time not very remote from the ſame period (for theſe humours never have affected one of the nations without ſome influence on the other) happened ſeveral riſings of the lower commons in England. Theſe inſurgents were certainly the majority of the inhabitants of the counties in which they reſided; and Cade, Ket, and Straw, at the head of their national guards, and fomented by certain traitors of high rank, did no more than exert, according to the doctrines of ours and the Pariſian ſocieties, the ſovereign power inherent in the majority.

We call the time of thoſe events a dark age. Indeed we are too indulgent to our own proficiency. The Abbé John Ball underſtood the rights of man as well as the Abbé Gregoire. That reverend patriarch of ſedition, and prototype of our modern preachers, was of opinion with the national aſſembly, that all the evils which have fallen upon men had been cauſed by an ignorance of their "having been born "and continued equal as to their rights." Had the populace been able to repeat that profound maxim all would have gone perfectly well with them. No tyranny, no vexation, no oppreſſion, no care, no ſorrow, could have exiſted in the world. This would have cured them like a charm for the tooth-ach. But the loweſt wretches, in their moſt ignorant ſtate, were able at all times to talk ſuch ſtuff; and yet at all times have they ſuffered many evils and many oppreſſions, both before and ſince the republication by the national

aſſembly

aſſembly of this ſpell of healing potency and virtue. The enlightened Dr. Ball, when he wiſhed to rekindle the lights and fires of his audience on this point, choſe for the text the following couplet:

When Adam delved and Eve ſpan,
Who was then the gentleman?

Of this ſapient maxim, however, I do not give him for the inventor. It ſeems to have been handed down by tradition, and had certainly become proverbial; but whether then compoſed, or only applied, thus much muſt be admitted, that in learning, ſenſe, energy, and comprehenſiveneſs, it is fully equal to all the modern diſſertations on the equality of mankind; and it has one advantage over them,—that it is in rhyme *.

There

* It is no ſmall loſs to the world, that the whole of this enlightened and philoſophic ſermon, preached to *two hundred thouſand* national guards aſſembled at Blackheath (a number probably equal to the ſublime and majeſtic *Federation* of the 14th of July 1790, in the *Champs de Mars)* is not preſerved. A ſhort abſtract is, however, to be found in Walſingham. I have added it here for the edification of the modern whigs, who may poſſibly except this precious little fragment from their general contempt of antient learning.

Ut ſuâ doctrinâ plures inficeret ad le Blackheth (ubi ducenta millia hominum communium fuêre ſimul congregata) hujuſcemodi ſermonem eſt exorſus.

Whan Adam dalfe, and Evĕ ſpan, who was than a gentleman?

Continuanſque ſermonem inceptum nitebatur per verba proverbii quod pro themate ſumpſerat, introducere & probare, *ab initio omnes pares creatos à naturâ*, ſervitutem per injuſtam oppreſſionem nequam hominum introductam contra Dei voluntatem, quia ſi Deo placuiſſet ſervos creâſſe, utique in principio mundi conſtituiſſet, quis ſervus, quiſve dominus futurus fuiſſet. Conſiderarent igitur jam tempus à Deo datum eis, in quo (depoſito ſervitutis jugo diutius) poſſent ſi vellent, libertate diu concupitâ gaudere. Quapropter monuit ut eſſent viri cordati, & amore boni patriſfamilias excolentis agrum ſuum & extirpantis ac reſecantis noxia gramina quæ fruges ſolent opprimere, & ipſi in præſenti facere feſtinarent; primò *majores regni dominos occidendo; deindè juridicos, juſticiarios & juratores patriæ perimendo*; poſtremò

There is no doubt, but that this great teacher of the rights of man decorated his diſcourſe on this valuable text, with lemmas, theorems, ſcholia, corollaries, and all the apparatus of ſcience, which was furniſhed in as great plenty and perfection

poſtremò quoſcunque ſcirent *in poſterum communitati nocivos:* tollerent de terrâ ſuâ: ſic demum & *pacem* ſibimet *parerent* & *ſecuritatem* in futurum; *ſi ſublatis majoribus eſſet inter eos æqua libertas, eadem nobilitas, par dignitas, ſimiliſque poteſtas.*

Here is diſplayed at once the whole of the grand arcanum pretended to be found out by the national aſſembly, for ſecuring future happineſs, peace, and tranquillity. There ſeems however to be ſome doubt whether this venerable protomartyr of philoſophy was inclined to carry his own declaration of the rights of men more rigidly into practice than the national aſſembly themſelves. He was, like them, only preaching licentiouſneſs to the populace to obtain power for himſelf, if we may believe what is ſubjoined by the hiſtorian.

Cumque hæc & *plura alia deliramenta* [think of this old fool's calling all the wiſe maxims of the French academy *deliramenta*] prædicâſſet, commune vulgus cum tanto favore proſequitur, ut *acclamarent eum archiepiſcopum futurum, & regni cancellarium.* Whether he would have taken theſe ſituations under theſe names, or would have changed the whole nomenclature of the ſtate and church, to be underſtood in the ſenſe of the revolution, is not ſo certain. It is probable that he would have changed the names and kept the ſubſtance of power.

We find too, that they had in thoſe days their *ſociety for conſtitutional information*, of which the reverend John Ball was a conſpicuous member, ſometimes under his own name, ſometimes under the feigned name of John Schep. Beſides him it conſiſted (as Knyghton tells us) of perſons who went by the real or fictitious names of Jack Mylner, Tom Baker, Jack Straw, Jack Trewman, Jack Carter, and probably of many more. Some of the choiceſt flowers of the publications, charitably written and circulated by them gratis, are upon record in Walſingham and Knyghton: and I am inclined to prefer the pithy and ſententious brevity of theſe *bulletins* of antient rebellion, before the looſe and confuſed prolixity of the modern advertiſements of conſtitutional information. They contain more good morality, and leſs bad politics; they had much more foundation in real oppreſſion; and they have the recommendation of being much better adapted to the capacities of thoſe for whoſe inſtruction they were intended. Whatever laudable pains the teachers of the preſent day appear to take, I cannot compliment them, ſo far as to allow, that they have ſucceeded in writing down to the level of their pupils, *the members of the ſovereign*, with half the ability of Jack Carter and the reverend John Ball.—That my readers may judge for themſelves, I ſhall give them one or two ſpecimens.

The firſt is an addreſs from the reverend John Ball under his *nom de guerre* of John Schep. I know not againſt what particular "guyle in borough" the writer means to caution

fection out of the dogmatic and polemic magazines, the old horſe-armory, of the ſchoolmen, among whom the Rev. Dr. Ball was bred, as they can be ſupplied from the new arſenal at Hackney. It was, no doubt, diſpoſed with all the adjutancy

caution the people; it may have been only a general cry againſt "*rotten boroughs*," which it was thought convenient then as now to make the firſt pretext, and place at the head of the liſt of grievances.

JOHN SCHEP.

John Schep ſometime Seint Mary Prieſt of Yorke, and now of Colcheſter, greeteth well John Nameleſſe, & John the Miller & John Carter, and *biddeth them that they beware of guyle in borough*, and ſtand together in God's name; and biddeth Piers Ploweman goe to his werke, and chaſtiſe well *Hob the robber*, [probably the king] and take with you John Trewman, and all his fellows and no moe.

John the Miller hath yground ſmal, ſmall, ſmall:
The King's Sonne of Heaven ſhal pay for all.
Beware or ye be woe,
Know your frende fro your foe.
Have enough and ſay hoe:
And do wel and better, and flee ſinne,
And ſeeke peace and holde you therein;

& ſo biddeth John Trewman, & all his fellowes.

The reader has perceived, from the laſt lines of this curious ſtate paper, how well the national aſſembly has copied its union of the profeſſion of univerſal peace, with the practice of murder and confuſion, and the blaſt of the trumpet of ſedition in all nations. He will, in the following conſtitutional paper, obſerve how well, in their enigmatical ſtyle, like the aſſembly and their abettors, the old philoſophers, proſcribe all hereditary diſtinction, and beſtow it only on virtue and wiſdom, according to their eſtimation of both. Yet theſe people are ſuppoſed never to have heard of "the rights of man!"

JACK MYLNER.

Jakke Mylner aſketh help to turne his mylne aright.

He hath grounden ſmal, ſmal,
The King's Sone of Heven he ſhall pay for alle.

Loke thy mylne go a ryyt with the four ſayles, and the poſt ſtande in ſteadfaſtneſſe.

tancy of definition and diviſion, in which (I ſpeak it with ſubmiſſion) the old marſhals were as able as the modern martinets. Neither can we deny, that the philoſophic auditory, when they had once obtained this knowledge, could never return to their former ignorance; or after ſo inſtructive a lecture be in the ſame ſtate of mind as if they had never heard it *. But theſe poor people, who were not to be envied for their knowledge, but pitied for their deluſion, were not reaſoned (that was impoſſible) but beaten out of their lights. With their teacher they were delivered over to the lawyers; who wrote in their blood the ſtatutes of the land, as harſhly, and in the ſame ſort of ink, as they and their teachers had written the rights of man.

Our doctors of the day are not ſo fond of quoting the opinions of this antient ſage as they are of imitating his con-

With ryyt & with myyt,
With ſkill & with wylle,
Lat myyt help ryyt,
And ſkyl go before wille,
And ryyht before myght,
Than goth our mylne aryght.
And if myght go before ryght,
And wylle before ſkylle;
Than is our mylne mys-a-dyght.

JACK CARTER underſtood perfectly the doctrine of looking to the *end*, with an indifference to the *means*, and the probability of much good ariſing from great evil.

Jakke Carter prayes yowe alle that ye make a gode *ende* of that ye have begunnen, & doth wele and ay bettur & bettur, for at the even men heryth the day. *For if the ende be wele than is alle wele.* Lat Peres the plowman my brother dwelle at home and dyght us corne, & I will go with yowe & helpe, that I may, to dyghte youre mete and youre drynke, that ye none fayle. Lokke that Hobbe robbyoure be wele chaſtyſed for leſyng of your grace; for ye have gret nede to take God with yowe in all your dedes. For now is tyme to be war.

* See the wiſe remark on this ſubject, in the Defence of Rights of Man, circulated by the ſocieties.

duct; Firſt, becauſe it might appear, that they are not as great inventors as they would be thought; and next, becauſe, unfortunately for his fame, he was not ſucceſsful. It is a remark, liable to as few exceptions as any generality can be, that they who applaud proſperous folly, and adore triumphant guilt, have never been known to ſuccour or even to pity human weakneſs or offence when they become ſubject to human viciſſitude, and meet with puniſhment inſtead of obtaining power. Abating for their want of ſenſibility to the ſufferings of their aſſociates, they are not ſo much in the wrong: for madneſs and wickedneſs are things foul and deformed in themſelves; and ſtand in need of all the coverings and trappings of fortune to recommend them to the multitude. Nothing can be more loathſome in their naked nature.

Aberrations like theſe, whether antient or modern, unſucceſsful or proſperous, are things of paſſage. They furniſh no argument for ſuppoſing *a multitude told by the head to be the people.* Such a multitude can have no ſort of title to alter the ſeat of power in the ſociety, in which it ever ought to be the obedient, and not the ruling or preſiding part. What power may belong to the whole maſs, in which maſs, the natural *ariſtocracy*, or what by convention is appointed to repreſent and ſtrengthen it, acts in its proper place, with its proper weight, and without being ſubjected to violence, is a deeper queſtion. But in that caſe, and with that concurrence, I ſhould have much doubt whether any raſh or deſperate changes in the ſtate, ſuch as we have ſeen in France, could ever be effected.

I have ſaid, that in all political queſtions the conſequences of any aſſumed rights are of great moment in deciding upon their validity. In this point of view let us a little ſcrutinize the effects of a right in the mere majority of the inhabitants

of any country of ſuperſeding and altering their government *at pleaſure.*

The ſum total of every people is compoſed of its units. Every individual muſt have a right to originate what afterwards is to become the act of the majority. Whatever he may lawfully originate, he may lawfully endeavour to accompliſh. He has a right therefore in his own particular to break the ties and engagements which bind him to the country in which he lives; and he has a right to make as many converts to his opinions, and to obtain as many aſſociates in his deſigns, as he can procure: For how can you know the diſpoſitions of the majority to deſtroy their government, but by tampering with ſome part of the body? You muſt begin by a ſecret conſpiracy, that you may end with a national confederation. The mere pleaſure of the beginner muſt be the ſole guide; ſince the mere pleaſure of others muſt be the ſole ultimate ſanction, as well as the ſole actuating principle in every part of the progreſs. Thus arbitrary will (the laſt corruption of ruling power) ſtep by ſtep, poiſons the heart of every citizen. If the undertaker fails, he has the misfortune of a rebel, but not the guilt. By ſuch doctrines, all love to our country, all pious veneration and attachment to its laws and cuſtoms, are obliterated from our minds; and nothing can reſult from this opinion, when grown into a principle, and animated by diſcontent, ambition, or enthuſiaſm, but a ſeries of conſpiracies and ſeditions, ſometimes ruinous to their authors, always noxious to the ſtate. No ſenſe of duty can prevent any man from being a leader or a follower in ſuch enterprizes. Nothing reſtrains the tempter; nothing guards the tempted. Nor is the new ſtate, fabricated by ſuch arts, ſafer than the old. What can prevent the mere will of any perſon, who hopes to unite the wills of others to his own, from an attempt wholly to over-

turn it? It wants nothing but a diſpoſition to trouble the eſtabliſhed order, to give a title to the enterprize.

When you combine this principle of the right to change a fixed and tolerable conſtitution of things at pleaſure, with the theory and practice of the French aſſembly, the political, civil, and moral irregularity are if poſſible aggravated. The aſſembly have found another road, and a far more commodious, to the deſtruction of an old government, and the legitimate formation of a new one, than through the previous will of the majority of what they call the people. Get, ſay they, the poſſeſſion of power by any means you can into your hands; and then a ſubſequent conſent (what they call an *addreſs of adheſion*) makes your authority as much the act of the people as if they had conferred upon you originally that kind and degree of power, which, without their permiſſion, you had ſeized upon. This is to give a direct ſanction to fraud, hypocriſy, perjury, and the breach of the moſt ſacred truſts that can exiſt between man and man. What can ſound with ſuch horrid diſcordance in the moral ear, as this poſition, That a delegate with limited powers may break his ſworn engagements to his conſtituent, aſſume an authority, never committed to him, to alter all things at his pleaſure; and then, if he can perſuade a large number of men to flatter him in the power he has uſurped, that he is abſolved in his own conſcience, and ought to ſtand acquitted in the eyes of mankind? On this ſcheme the maker of the experiment muſt begin with a determined perjury. That point is certain. He muſt take his chance for the expiatory addreſſes. This is to make the ſucceſs of villainy the ſtandard of innocence.

Without drawing on, therefore, very ſhocking conſequences, neither by previous conſent, nor by ſubſequent ratification of a *mere reckoned majority*, can any ſet of men attempt

attempt to diſſolve the ſtate at their pleaſure. To apply this to our preſent ſubject. When the ſeveral orders, in their ſeveral bailliages, had met in the year 1789, ſuch of them, I mean, as had met peaceably and conſtitutionally, to chooſe and to inſtruct their repreſentatives, ſo organized, and ſo acting, (becauſe they were organized and were acting according to the conventions which made them a people) they were the *people* of France. They had a legal and a natural capacity to be conſidered as that people. But obſerve, whilſt they were in this ſtate, that is, whilſt they were a people, in no one of their inſtructions did they charge or even hint at any of thoſe things, which have drawn upon the uſurping aſſembly, and their adherents, the deteſtation of the rational and thinking part of mankind. I will venture to affirm, without the leaſt apprehenſion of being contradicted by any perſon who knows the then ſtate of France, that if any one of the changes were propoſed, which form the foundamental parts of their revolution, and compoſe its moſt diſtinguiſhing acts, it would not have had one vote in twenty thouſand in any order. Their inſtructions purported the direct contrary to all thoſe famous proceedings, which are defended as the acts of the people. Had ſuch proceedings been expected, the great probability is, that the people would then have riſen, as to a man, to prevent them. The whole organization of the aſſembly was altered, the whole frame of the kingdom was changed, before theſe things could be done. It is long to tell, by what evil arts of the conſpirators, and by what extreme weakneſs and want of ſteadineſs in the lawful government, this equal uſurpation on the rights of the prince and people, having firſt cheated, and then offered violence to both, has been able to triumph, and to employ with ſucceſs the forged ſignature of an impriſoned ſovereign, and the ſpurious voice

of

of dictated addreſſes, to a ſubſequent ratification of things that had never received any previous ſanction, general or particular, expreſſed or implied, from the nation (in whatever ſenſe that word is taken) or from any part of it.

After the weighty and reſpectable part of the people had been murdered, or driven by the menaces of murder from their houſes, or were diſperſed in exile into every country in Europe; after the ſoldiery had been debauched from their officers; after property had loſt its weight and conſideration, along with its ſecurity; after voluntary clubs and aſſociations of factious and unprincipled men were ſubſtituted in the place of all the legal corporations of the kingdom arbitrarily diſſolved; after freedom had been baniſhed from *thoſe popular meetings, whoſe ſole recommendation is freedom — After it had come to that paſs; that no diſſent dared to appear in any of them, but at the certain price of life; after even diſſent had been anticipated, and aſſaſſination became as quick as ſuſpicion; ſuch pretended ratification by addreſſes could be no act of what any lover of the people would chooſe to call by their name. It is that voice which every ſucceſsful uſurpation, as well as this before us, may eaſily procure, even without making (as theſe tyrants have made) donatives from the ſpoil of one part of the citizens to corrupt the other.

The pretended *rights of man*, which have made this havock, cannot be the rights of the people. For to be a people, and to have theſe rights, are things incompatible. The one ſuppoſes the preſence, the other the abſence of a ſtate of civil ſociety. The very foundation of the French commonwealth is falſe and ſelf-deſtructive; nor can its principles be adopted in any country, without the certainty of bringing it to the very ſame condition in which France is found.

* The primary aſſemblies.

Attempts

Attempts are made to introduce them into every nation in Europe. This nation, as poſſeſſing the greateſt influence, they wiſh moſt to corrupt, as by that means they are aſſured the contagion muſt become general. I hope, therefore, I ſhall be excuſed, if I endeavour to ſhew, as ſhortly as the matter will admit, the danger of giving to them, either avowedly or tacitly, the ſmalleſt countenance.

There are times and circumſtances, in which not to ſpeak out is at leaſt to connive. Many think it enough for them, that the principles propagated by theſe clubs and ſocieties, enemies to their country and its conſtitution, are not owned by the *modern whigs in parliament*, who are ſo warm in condemnation of Mr. Burke and his book, and of courſe of all the principles of the antient conſtitutional whigs of this kingdom. Certainly they are not owned. But are they condemned with the ſame zeal as Mr. Burke and his book are condemned? Are they condemned at all? Are they rejected or diſcountenanced in any way whatſoever? Is any man who would fairly examine into the demeanour and principles of thoſe ſocieties, and that too very moderately, and in the way rather of admonition than of puniſhment, is ſuch a man even decently treated? Is he not reproached, as if, in condemning ſuch principles, he had belied the conduct of his whole life, ſuggeſting that his life had been governed by principles ſimilar to thoſe which he now reprobates? The French ſyſtem is in the mean time, by many active agents out of doors, rapturouſly praiſed; the Britiſh conſtitution is coldly tolerated. But theſe conſtitutions are different, both in the foundation and in the whole ſuperſtructure; and it is plain, that you cannot build up the one but on the ruins of the other. After all, if the French be a ſuperior ſyſtem of liberty, why ſhould we not adopt it? To what end are our praiſes? Is excellence held out to us only

that

that we ſhould not copy after it? And what is there in the manners of the people, or in the climate of France, which renders that ſpecies of republic fitted for them, and unſuitable to us? A ſtrong and marked difference between the two nations ought to be ſhewn, before we can admit a conſtant affected panegyrick, a ſtanding annual commemoration, to be without any tendency to an example.

But the leaders of party will not go the length of the doctrines taught by the ſeditious clubs. I am ſure they do not mean to do ſo. God forbid! Perhaps even thoſe who are directly carrying on the work of this pernicious foreign faction, do not all of them intend to produce all the miſchiefs which muſt inevitably follow from their having any ſucceſs in their proceedings. As to leaders in parties, nothing is more common than to ſee them blindly led. The world is governed by go-betweens. Theſe go-betweens influence the perſons with whom they carry on the intercourſe, by ſtating their own ſenſe to each of them as the ſenſe of the other; and thus they reciprocally maſter both ſides. It is firſt buzzed about the ears of leaders, "that their friends with-
" out doors are very eager for ſome meaſure, or very warm
" about ſome opinion—that you muſt not be too rigid with
" them. They are uſeful perſons, and zealous in the cauſe.
" They may be a little wrong; but the ſpirit of liberty muſt
" not be damped; and by the influence you obtain from
" ſome degree of concurrence with them at preſent, you
" may be enabled to ſet them right hereafter."

Thus the leaders are at firſt drawn to a connivance with ſentiments and proceedings, often totally different from their ſerious and deliberate notions. But their acquieſcence anſwers every purpoſe.

With no better than ſuch powers, the go-betweens aſſume a new repreſentative character. What at beſt was but an acquieſcence,

acquieſcence, is magnified into an authority, and thence into a deſire on the part of the leaders; and it is carried down as ſuch to the ſubordinate members of parties. By this artifice they in their turn are led into meaſures which at firſt, perhaps, few of them wiſhed at all, or at leaſt did not deſire vehemently or ſyſtematically.

There is in all parties, between the principal leaders in parliament, and the loweſt followers out of doors, a middle ſort of men; a ſort of equeſtrian order, who, by the ſpirit of that middle ſituation, are the fitteſt for preventing things from running to exceſs. But indeciſion, though a vice of a totally different character, is the natural accomplice of violence. The irreſolution and timidity of thoſe who compoſe this middle order, often prevents the effect of their controlling ſituation. The fear of differing with the authority of leaders on the one hand, and of contradicting the deſires of the multitude on the other, induces them to give a careleſs and paſſive aſſent to meaſures in which they never were conſulted: and thus things proceed, by a ſort of activity of inertneſs, until whole bodies, leaders, middle men, and followers, are all hurried, with every appearance, and with many of the effects, of unanimity, into ſchemes of politics, in the ſubſtance of which no two of them were ever fully agreed, and the origin and authors of which, in this circular mode of communication, none of them find it poſſible to trace. In my experience I have ſeen much of this in affairs, which, though trifling in compariſon to the preſent, were yet of ſome importance to parties; and I have known them ſuffer by it. The ſober part give their ſanction, at firſt through inattention and levity; at laſt they give it through neceſſity. A violent ſpirit is raiſed, which the preſiding minds, after a time, find it impracticable to ſtop at their pleaſure, to control, to regulate, or even to direct.

This ſhews, in my opinion, how very quick and awakened all men ought to be, who are looked up to by the public, and who deſerve that confidence, to prevent a ſurpriſe on their opinions, when dogmas are ſpread, and projects purſued, by which the foundations of ſociety may be affected. Before they liſten even to moderate alterations in the government of their country, they ought to take care that principles are not propagated for that purpoſe, which are too big for their object. Doctrines limited in their preſent application, and wide in their general principles, are never meant to be confined to what they at firſt pretend. If I were to form a prognoſtic of the effect of the preſent machinations on the people, from their ſenſe of any grievance they ſuffer under this conſtitution, my mind would be at eaſe. But there is a wide difference between the multitude, when they act againſt their government, from a ſenſe of grievance, or from zeal for ſome opinions. When men are thoroughly poſſeſſed with that zeal, it is difficult to calculate its force. It is certain, that its power is by no means in exact proportion to its reaſonableneſs. It muſt always have been diſcoverable by perſons of reflection, but it is now obvious to the world, that a theory concerning government may become as much a cauſe of fanaticiſm as a *dogma* in religion. There is a boundary to men's paſſions when they act from feeling; none when they are under the influence of imagination. Remove a grievance, and, when men act from feeling, you go a great way towards quieting a commotion. But the good or bad conduct of a government, the protection men have enjoyed, or the oppreſſion they have ſuffered under it, are of no ſort of moment, when a faction proceeding upon ſpeculative grounds, is thoroughly heated againſt its form. When a man is, from ſyſtem, furious againſt monarchy or epiſcopacy, the good conduct of the monarch or the biſhop has

has no other effect than further to irritate the adverſary. He is provoked at it as furniſhing a plea for preſerving the thing which he wiſhes to deſtroy. His mind will be heated as much by the ſight of a ſceptre, a mace, or a verge, as if he had been daily bruiſed and wounded by theſe ſymbols of authority. Mere ſpectacles, mere names, will become ſufficient cauſes to ſtimulate the people to war and tumult.

Some gentlemen are not terrified by the facility with which government has been overturned in France. The people of France, they ſay, had nothing to loſe in the deſtruction of a bad conſtitution; but though not the beſt poſſible, we have ſtill a good ſtake in ours, which will hinder us from deſperate riſques. Is this any ſecurity at all againſt thoſe who ſeem to perſuade themſelves, and who labour to perſuade others, that our conſtitution is an uſurpation in its origin, unwiſe in its contrivance, miſchievous in its effects, contrary to the rights of man, and in all its parts a perfect nuiſance? What motive has any rational man, who thinks in that manner, to ſpill his blood, or even to riſque a ſhilling of his fortune, or to waſte a moment of his leiſure, to preſerve it? If he has any duty relative to it, his duty is to deſtroy it. A conſtitution on ſufferance is a conſtitution condemned. Sentence is already paſſed upon it. The execution is only delayed. On the principles of theſe gentlemen it neither has, nor ought to have, any ſecurity. So far as regards them, it is left naked, without friends, partizans, aſſertors, or protectors.

Let us examine into the value of this ſecurity upon the principles of thoſe who are more ſober; of thoſe who think, indeed, the French conſtitution better, or at leaſt as good, as the Britiſh, without going to all the lengths of the warmer politicians in reprobating their own. Their ſecurity amounts in reality to nothing more than this;—that the difference

between their republican ſyſtem and the Britiſh limited monarchy is not worth a civil war. This opinion, I admit, will prevent people not very enterpriſing in their nature, from an active undertaking againſt the Britiſh conſtitution. But it is the pooreſt defenſive principle that ever was infuſed into the mind of man againſt the attempts of thoſe who will enterpriſe. It will tend totally to remove from their minds that very terror of a civil war which is held out as our ſole ſecurity. They who think ſo well of the French conſtitution, certainly will not be the perſons to carry on a war to prevent their obtaining a great benefit, or at worſt a fair exchange. They will not go to battle in favour of a cauſe in which their defeat might be more advantageous to the public than their victory. They muſt at leaſt tacitly abet thoſe who endeavour to make converts to a ſound opinion; they muſt diſcountenance thoſe who would oppoſe its propagation. In proportion as by theſe means the enterpriſing party is ſtrengthened, the dread of a ſtruggle is leſſened. See what an encouragement this is to the enemies of the conſtitution! A few aſſaſſinations, and a very great deſtruction of property, we know they conſider as no real obſtacles in the way of a grand political change. And they will hope, that here, if antimonarchical opinions gain ground, as they have done in France, they may, as in France, accompliſh a revolution without a war.

They who think ſo well of the French conſtitution cannot be ſeriouſly alarmed by any progreſs made by its partizans. Proviſions for ſecurity are not to be received from thoſe who think that there is no danger. No! there is no plan of ſecurity to be liſtened to but from thoſe who entertain the ſame fears with ourſelves; from thoſe who think that the thing to be ſecured is a great bleſſing; and the thing againſt which we

would ſecure it a great miſchief. Every perſon of a different opinion muſt be careleſs about ſecurity.

I believe the author of the Reflections, whether he fears the deſigns of that ſet of people with reaſon or not, cannot prevail on himſelf to deſpiſe them. He cannot deſpiſe them for their numbers, which, though ſmall, compared with the ſound part of the community, are not inconſiderable: he cannot look with contempt on their influence, their activity, or the kind of talents and tempers which they poſſeſs, exactly calculated for the work they have in hand, and the minds they chiefly apply to. Do we not ſee their moſt conſiderable and accredited miniſters, and ſeveral of their party of weight and importance, active in ſpreading miſchievous opinions, in giving ſanction to ſeditious writings, in promoting ſeditious anniverſaries? and what part of their deſcription has diſowned them or their proceedings? When men, circumſtanced as theſe are, publicly declare ſuch admiration of a foreign conſtitution, and ſuch contempt of our own, it would be, in the author of the Reflections, thinking as he does of the French conſtitution, infamouſly to cheat the reſt of the nation to their ruin, to ſay there is no danger.

In eſtimating danger, we are obliged to take into our calculation the character and diſpoſition of the enemy into whoſe hands we may chance to fall. The genius of this faction is eaſily diſcerned by obſerving with what a very different eye they have viewed the late foreign revolutions. Two have paſſed before them. That of France and that of Poland. The ſtate of Poland was ſuch, that there could ſcarcely exiſt two opinions, but that a reformation of its conſtitution, even at ſome expence of blood, might be ſeen without much diſapprobation. No confuſion could be feared in ſuch an enterpriſe; becauſe the eſtabliſhment to be reformed was itſelf a ſtate of confuſion. A king without authority; nobles without

without union or ſubordination; a people without arts, induſtry, commerce, or liberty; no order within; no defence without; no effective public force, but a foreign force, which entered a naked country at will, and diſpoſed of every thing at pleaſure. Here was a ſtate of things which ſeemed to invite, and might perhaps juſtify bold enterprize and deſperate experiment. But in what manner was this chaos brought into order? The means were as ſtriking to the imagination, as ſatisfactory to the reaſon, and ſoothing to the moral ſentiments. In contemplating that change, humanity has every thing to rejoice and to glory in; nothing to be aſhamed of, nothing to ſuffer. So far as it has gone, it probably is the moſt pure and defecated public good which ever has been conferred on mankind. We have ſeen anarchy and ſervitude at once removed; a throne ſtrengthened for the protection of the people, without trenching on their liberties; all foreign cabal baniſhed, by changing the crown from elective to hereditary; and what was a matter of pleaſing wonder, we have ſeen a reigning king, from an heroic love to his country, exerting himſelf with all the toil, the dexterity, the management, the intrigue, in favour of a family of ſtrangers, with which ambitious men labour for the aggrandiſement of their own. Ten millions of men in a way of being freed gradually, and therefore ſafely to themſelves and the ſtate, not from civil or political chains, which, bad as they are, only fetter the mind, but from ſubſtantial perſonal bondage. Inhabitants of cities, before without privileges, placed in the conſideration which belongs to that improved and connecting ſituation of ſocial life. One of the moſt proud, numerous, and fierce bodies of nobility and gentry ever known in the world, arranged only in the foremoſt rank of free and generous citizens. Not one man incurred loſs, or ſuffered degradation. All, from the king to the day-labourer, were improved in their condition. Every thing

thing was kept in its place and order; but in that place and order every thing was bettered. To add to this happy wonder (this unheard-of conjunction of wiſdom and fortune) not one drop of blood was ſpilled; no treachery; no outrage; no ſyſtem of ſlander more cruel than the ſword; no ſtudied inſults on religion, morals, or manners; no ſpoil; no confiſcation; no citizen beggared; none impriſoned; none exiled: the whole was effected with a policy, a diſcretion, an unanimity and ſecrecy, ſuch as have never been before known on any occaſion; but ſuch wonderful conduct was reſerved for this glorious conſpiracy in favour of the true and genuine rights and intereſts of men. Happy people, if they know to proceed as they have begun! Happy prince, worthy to begin with ſplendor, or to cloſe with glory, a race of patriots and of kings: and to leave

A name, which ev'ry wind to heav'n would bear,
Which men to ſpeak, and angels joy to hear.

To finiſh all—this great good, as in the inſtant it is, contains in it the ſeeds of all further improvement; and may be conſidered as in a regular progreſs, becauſe founded on ſimilar principles, towards the ſtable excellence of a Britiſh conſtitution.

Here was a matter for congratulation and for feſtive remembrance through ages. Here moraliſts and divines might indeed relax in their temperance to exhilarate their humanity. But mark the character of our faction. All their enthuſiaſm is kept for the French revolution. They cannot pretend that France had ſtood ſo much in need of a change as Poland. They cannot pretend that Poland has not obtained a better ſyſtem of liberty or of government than it enjoyed before. They cannot aſſert, that the Poliſh revolu-

tion coſt more dearly than that of France to the intereſts and feelings of multitudes of men. But the cold and ſubordinate light in which they look upon the one, and the pains they take to preach up the other of theſe revolutions, leave us no choice in fixing on their motives. Both revolutions profeſs liberty as their object; but in obtaining this object the one proceeds from anarchy to order; the other from order to anarchy. The firſt ſecures its liberty by eſtabliſhing its throne; the other builds its freedom on the ſubverſion of its monarchy. In the one their means are unſtained by crimes, and their ſettlement favours morality. In the other, vice and confuſion are in the very eſſence of their purſuit, and of their enjoyment. The circumſtances in which theſe two events differ, muſt cauſe the difference we make in their comparative eſtimation. Theſe turn the ſcale with the ſocieties in favour of France. *Ferrum eſt quod amant.* The frauds, the violences, the ſacrileges, the havock and ruin of families, the diſperſion and exile of the pride and flower of a great country, the diſorder, the confuſion, the anarchy, the violation of property, the cruel murders, the inhuman confiſcations, and in the end the inſolent domination of bloody, ferocious, and ſenſeleſs clubs.—Theſe are the things which they love and admire. What men admire and love, they would ſurely act. Let us ſee what is done in France; and then let us undervalue any the ſlighteſt danger of falling into the hands of ſuch a mercileſs and ſavage faction!

'But the leaders of the factious ſocieties are too wild to 'ſucceed in this their undertaking.' I hope ſo. But ſuppoſing them wild and abſurd, is there no danger but from wiſe and reflecting men? Perhaps the greateſt miſchiefs that have happened in the world, have happened from perſons as wild as thoſe we think the wildeſt. In truth, they are the fitteſt beginners of all great changes. Why encourage men

men in a miſchievous proceeding, becauſe their abſurdity may diſappoint their malice? 'But noticing them may give 'them conſequence.' Certainly. But they are noticed; and they are noticed, not with reproof, but with that kind of countenance which is given by an *apparent* concurrence (not a *real* one, I am convinced) of a great party, in the praiſes of the object which they hold out to imitation.

But I hear a language ſtill more extraordinary, and indeed of ſuch a nature as muſt ſuppoſe, or leave, us at their mercy. It is this—'You know their promptitude in writing, 'and their diligence in caballing; to write, ſpeak, or act 'againſt them, will only ſtimulate them to new efforts.'—This way of conſidering the principle of their conduct pays but a poor compliment to theſe gentlemen. They pretend that their doctrines are infinitely beneficial to mankind; but it ſeems they would keep them to themſelves, if they were not greatly provoked. They are benevolent from ſpite. Their oracles are like thoſe of *Proteus* (whom ſome people think they reſemble in many particulars) who never would give his reſponſes unleſs you uſed him as ill as poſſible. Theſe cats, it ſeems, would not give out their electrical light without having their backs well rubbed. But this is not to do them perfect juſtice. They are ſufficiently communicative. Had they been quiet, the propriety of any agitation of topics on the origin and primary rights of government, in oppoſition to their private ſentiments, might poſſibly be doubted. But, as it is notorious, that they were proceeding as faſt, and as far, as time and circumſtances would admit, both in their diſcuſſions and cabals—as it is not to be denied, that they had opened a correſpondence with a foreign faction, the moſt wicked the world ever ſaw, and eſtabliſhed anniverſaries to commemorate the moſt monſtrous, cruel,

and perfidious of all the proceedings of that faction—the queſtion is, whether their conduct was to be regarded in ſilence, leſt our interference ſhould render them outrageous? Then let them deal as they pleaſe with the conſtitution. Let the lady be paſſive, leſt the raviſher ſhould be driven to force. Reſiſtance will only increaſe his deſires. Yes, truly, if the reſiſtance be feigned and feeble. But they who are wedded to the conſtitution will not act the part of wittols. They will drive ſuch ſeducers from the houſe on the firſt appearance of their love-letters and offered aſſignations. But if the author of the Reflections, though a vigilant, was not a diſcreet guardian of the conſtitution, let them who have the ſame regard to it, ſhew themſelves as vigilant and more ſkilful in repelling the attacks of ſeduction or violence. Their freedom from jealouſy is equivocal, and may ariſe as well from indifference to the object, as from confidence in her virtue.

On their principle, it is the reſiſtance, and not the aſſault, which produces the danger. I admit, indeed, that if we eſtimated the danger by the value of the writings, it would be little worthy of our attention: contemptible theſe writings are in every ſenſe. But they are not the cauſe; they are the diſguſting ſymptoms, of a frightful diſtemper. They are not otherwiſe of conſequence than as they ſhew the evil habit of the bodies from whence they come. In that light the meaneſt of them is a ſerious thing. If however I ſhould under-rate them; and if the truth is, that they are not the reſult, but the cauſe of the diſorders I ſpeak of, ſurely thoſe who circulate operative poiſons, and give, to whatever force they have by their nature, the further operation of their authority and adoption, are to be cenſured, watched, and, if poſſible, repreſſed.

At what diſtance the direct danger from ſuch factions may

be, it is not eaſy to fix. An adaptation of circumſtances to deſigns and principles is neceſſary. But theſe cannot be wanting for any long time in the ordinary courſe of ſublunary affairs. Great diſcontents frequently ariſe in the beſt-conſtituted governments, from cauſes which no human wiſdom can foreſee, and no human power can prevent. They occur at uncertain periods, but at periods which are not commonly far aſunder. Governments of all kinds are adminiſtered only by men; and great miſtakes, tending to inflame theſe diſcontents, may concur. The indeciſion of thoſe who happen to rule at the critical time, their ſupine neglect, or their precipitate and ill-judged attention, may aggravate the public misfortunes. In ſuch a ſtate of things, the principles, now only ſown, will ſhoot out and vegetate in full luxuriance. In ſuch circumſtances the minds of the people become ſore and ulcerated. They are put out of humour with all public men, and all public parties; they are fatigued with their diſſenſions; they are irritated at their coalitions; they are made eaſily to believe, (what much pains are taken to make them believe) that all oppoſitions are factious, and all courtiers baſe and ſervile. From their diſguſt at men, they are ſoon led to quarrel with their frame of government, which they preſume gives nouriſhment to the vices, real or ſuppoſed, of thoſe who adminiſter in it. Miſtaking malignity for ſagacity, they are ſoon led to caſt off all hope from a good adminiſtration of affairs, and come to think that all reformation depends, not on a change of actors, but upon an alteration in the machinery. Then will be felt the full effect of encouraging doctrines which tend to make the citizens deſpiſe their conſtitution. Then will be felt the plenitude of the miſchief of teaching the people to believe, that all antient inſtitutions are the reſults of ignorance; and that all preſcriptive government is in its nature uſurpation. Then

will be felt, in all its energy, the danger of encouraging a ſpirit of litigation in perſons of that immature and imperfect ſtate of knowledge which ſerves to render them ſuſceptible of doubts but incapable of their ſolution. Then will be felt, in all its aggravation, the pernicious conſequence of deſtroying all docility in the minds of thoſe who are not formed for finding their own way in the labyrinths of political theory, and are made to reject the clue, and to diſdain the guide. Then will be felt, and too late will be acknowledged, the ruin which follows the disjoining of religion from the ſtate; the ſeparation of morality from policy; and the giving conſcience no concern and no coactive or coercive force in the moſt material of all the ſocial ties, the principle of our obligations to government.

I know too, that beſides this vain, contradictory, and ſelf-deſtructive ſecurity, which ſome men derive from the habitual attachment of the people to this conſtitution, whilſt they ſuffer it with a ſort of ſportive acquieſcence to be brought into contempt before their faces, they have other grounds for removing all apprehenſion from their minds. They are of opinion, that there are too many men of great hereditary eſtates and influence in the kingdom, to ſuffer the eſtabliſhment of the levelling ſyſtem which has taken place in France. This is very true, if in order to guide the power, which now attends their property, theſe men poſſeſs the wiſdom which is involved in early fear. But if through a ſupine ſecurity, to which ſuch fortunes are peculiarly liable, they neglect the uſe of their influence in the ſeaſon of their power, on the firſt derangement of ſociety, the nerves of their ſtrength will be cut. Their eſtates, inſtead of being the means of their ſecurity, will become the very cauſes of their danger. Inſtead of beſtowing influence they will excite rapacity. They will be looked to as a prey.

Such

Such will be the impotent condition of thoſe men of great hereditary eſtates, who indeed diſlike the deſigns that are carried on, but whoſe diſlike is rather that of ſpectators, than of parties that may be concerned in the cataſtrophe of the piece. But riches do not in all caſes ſecure even an inert and paſſive reſiſtance. There are always, in that deſcription, men whoſe fortunes, when their minds are once vitiated by paſſion or by evil principle, are by no means a ſecurity from their actually taking their part againſt the public tranquillity. We ſee to what low and deſpicable paſſions of all kinds many men in that claſs are ready to ſacrifice the patrimonial eſtates, which might be perpetuated in their families with ſplendor, and with the fame of hereditary benefactors to mankind from generation to generation. Do we not ſee how lightly people treat their fortunes when under the influence of the paſſion of gaming? The game of ambition or reſentment will be played by many of the rich and great, as deſperately, and with as much blindneſs to the conſequences, as any other game. Was he a man of no rank or fortune, who firſt ſet on foot the diſturbances which have ruined France? Paſſion blinded him to the conſequences, ſo far as they concerned himſelf; and as to the conſequences with regard to others, they were no part of his conſideration; nor ever will be with thoſe who bear any reſemblance to that virtuous patriot and lover of the rights of man.

There is alſo a time of inſecurity, when intereſts of all ſorts become objects of ſpeculation. Then it is, that their very attachment to wealth and importance will induce ſeveral perſons of opulence to liſt themſelves, and even to take a lead with the party which they think moſt likely to prevail, in order to obtain to themſelves conſideration in ſome new order or diſorder of things. They may be led to act in this manner,

manner, that they may ſecure ſome portion of their own property; and perhaps to become partakers of the ſpoil of their own order. Thoſe who ſpeculate on change, always make a great number among people of rank and fortune, as well as amongſt the low and the indigent.

What ſecurity againſt all this?—All human ſecurities are liable to uncertainty. But if any thing bids fair for the prevention of ſo great a calamity, it muſt conſiſt in the uſe of the ordinary means of juſt influence in ſociety, whilſt thoſe means continue unimpaired. The public judgment ought to receive a proper direction. All weighty men may have their ſhare in ſo good a work. As yet, notwithſtanding the ſtrutting and lying independence of a braggart philoſophy, nature maintains her rights, and great names have great prevalence. Two ſuch men as Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox, adding to their authority in a point in which they concur, even by their diſunion in every thing elſe, might frown theſe wicked opinions out of the kingdom. But if the influence of either of them, or the influence of men like them, ſhould, againſt their ſerious intentions, be otherwiſe perverted, they may countenance opinions which (as I have ſaid before, and could wiſh over and over again to preſs) they may in vain attempt to control. In their theory, theſe doctrines admit no limit, no qualification whatſoever. No man can ſay how far he will go, who joins with thoſe who are avowedly going to the utmoſt extremities. What ſecurity is there for ſtopping ſhort at all in theſe wild conceits? Why, neither more nor leſs than this—that the moral ſentiments of ſome few amongſt them do put ſome check on their ſavage theories. But let us take care. The moral ſentiments, ſo nearly connected with early prejudice as to be almoſt one and the ſame thing, will aſſuredly not live long under a diſcipline, which has for its baſis the deſtruction of all prejudices, and the making

making the mind proof againſt all dread of conſequences flowing from the pretended truths that are taught by their philoſophy.

In this ſchool the moral ſentiments muſt grow weaker and weaker every day. The more cautious of theſe teachers, in laying down their maxims, draw as much of the concluſion as ſuits, not with their premiſes, but with their policy. They truſt the reſt to the ſagacity of their pupils. Others, and theſe are the moſt vaunted for their ſpirit, not only lay down the ſame premiſes, but boldly draw the concluſions to the deſtruction of our whole conſtitution in church and ſtate. But are theſe concluſions truly drawn? Yes, moſt certainly. Their principles are wild and wicked. But let juſtice be done even to phrenſy and villainy. Theſe teachers are perfectly ſyſtematic. No man who aſſumes their grounds can tolerate the Britiſh conſtitution in church or ſtate. Theſe teachers profeſs to ſcorn all mediocrity; to engage for perfection; to proceed by the ſimpleſt and ſhorteſt courſe. They build their politics, not on convenience but on truth; and they profeſs to conduct men to certain happineſs by the aſſertion of their undoubted rights. With them there is no compromiſe. All other governments are uſurpations, which juſtify and even demand reſiſtance.

Their principles always go to the extreme. They who go with the principles of the antient whigs, which are thoſe contained in Mr. Burke's book, never can go too far. They may indeed ſtop ſhort of ſome hazardous and ambiguous excellence, which they will be taught to poſtpone to any reaſonable degree of good they may actually poſſeſs. The opinions maintained in that book never can lead to an extreme, becauſe their foundation is laid in an oppoſition to extremes. The foundation of government is there laid, not in imaginary rights of men, (which at beſt is a confuſion of

judicial

judicial with civil principles) but in political convenience, and in human nature; either as that nature is univerſal, or as it is modified by local habits and ſocial aptitudes. The foundation of government, (thoſe who have read that book will recollect) is laid in a proviſion for our wants, and in a conformity to our duties; it is to purvey for the one; it is to enforce the other. Theſe doctrines do of themſelves gravitate to a middle point, or to ſome point near a middle. They ſuppoſe indeed a certain portion of liberty to be eſſential to all good government; but they infer that this liberty is to be blended into the government; to harmonize with its forms and its rules; and to be made ſubordinate to its end. Thoſe who are not with that book are with its oppoſite. For there is no medium beſides the medium itſelf. That medium is not ſuch, becauſe it is found there; but it is found there, becauſe it is conformable to truth and nature. In this we do not follow the author; but we and the author travel together upon the ſame ſafe and middle path.

The theory contained in his book is not to furniſh principles for making a new conſtitution, but for illuſtrating the principles of a conſtitution already made. It is a theory drawn from the *fact* of our government. They who oppoſe it are bound to ſhew, that his theory militates with that fact. Otherwiſe, their quarrel is not with his book, but with the conſtitution of their country. The whole ſcheme of our mixed conſtitution is to prevent any one of its principles from being carried as far, as taken by itſelf, and theoretically, it would go. Allow that to be the true policy of the Britiſh ſyſtem, then moſt of the faults with which that ſyſtem ſtands charged will appear to be, not imperfections into which it has inadvertently fallen, but excellencies which it has ſtu'iouſly ſought. To avoid the perfections of extreme, all its ſeveral parts are ſo conſtituted, as not alone to anſwer their

their own ſeveral ends, but alſo each to limit and control the others: inſomuch, that take which of the principles you pleaſe—you will find its operation checked and ſtopped at a certain point. The whole movement ſtands ſtill rather than that any part ſhould proceed beyond its boundary. From thence it reſults, that in the Britiſh conſtitution, there is a perpetual treaty and compromiſe going on, ſometimes openly, ſometimes with leſs obſervation. To him who contemplates the Britiſh conſtitution, as to him who contemplates the ſubordinate material world, it will always be a matter of his moſt curious inveſtigation, to diſcover the ſecret of this mutual limitation.

——— Finita *poteſtas denique* cuique
Quanam ſit ratione, atque alte terminus hærens?

They who have acted, as in France they have done, upon a ſcheme wholly different, and who aim at the abſtract and unlimited perfection of power in the popular part, can be of no ſervice to us in any of our political arrangements. They who in their headlong career have overpaſſed the goal, can furniſh no example to thoſe who aim to go no further. The temerity of ſuch ſpeculators is no more an example than the timidity of others. The one ſort ſcorns the right; the other fears it, both miſs it. But thoſe who by violence go beyond the barrier, are without queſtion the moſt miſchievous; becauſe to go beyond it they overturn and deſtroy it. To ſay they have ſpirit, is to ſay nothing in their praiſe. The untempered ſpirit of madneſs, blindneſs, immorality, and impiety, deſerves no commendation. He that ſets his houſe on fire becauſe his fingers are froſt-bitten, can never be a fit inſtructor in the method of providing our habitations with a cheerful and ſalutary warmth. We want no foreign examples to rekindle in us the flame of liberty.

The example of our own anceſtors is abundantly ſufficient to maintain the ſpirit of freedom in its full vigour, and to qualify it in all its exertions. The example of a wiſe, moral, well-natured, and well-tempered ſpirit of freedom, is that alone which can be uſeful to us, or in the leaſt degree reputable or ſafe. Our fabric is ſo conſtituted; one part of it bears ſo much on the other, the parts are ſo made for one another, and for nothing elſe, that to introduce any foreign matter into it, is to deſtroy it.

What has been ſaid of the Roman empire, is at leaſt as true of the Britiſh conſtitution—" *Octingentorum annorum* " *fortuna, diſciplinaque, compages hæc coaluit; quæ convelli* " *ſine convellentium exitio non poteſt.*"—This Britiſh conſtitution has not been ſtruck out at an heat by a ſet of preſumptuous men, like the aſſembly of pettifoggers run mad in Paris.

" *'Tis not the haſty product of a day,*
" *But the well-ripen'd fruit of wiſe delay.*"

It is the reſult of the thoughts of many minds, in many ages. It is no ſimple, no ſuperficial thing, nor to be eſtimated by ſuperficial underſtandings. An ignorant man, who is not fool enough to meddle with his clock, is however ſufficiently confident to think he can ſafely take to pieces, and put together at his pleaſure, a moral machine of another guiſe importance and complexity, compoſed of far other wheels, and ſprings, and balances, and counteracting and co-operating powers. Men little think how immorally they act in raſhly meddling with what they do not underſtand. Their deluſive good intention is no ſort of excuſe for their preſumption. They who truly mean well muſt be fearful of acting ill. The Britiſh conſtitution may have its advantages pointed out to wiſe and reflecting minds; but it is of

too high an order of excellence to be adapted to thoſe which are common. It takes in too many views, it makes too many combinations, to be ſo much as comprehended by ſhallow and ſuperficial underſtandings. Profound thinkers will know it in its reaſon and ſpirit. The leſs enquiring will recognize it in their feelings and their experience. They will thank God they have a ſtandard, which, in the moſt eſſential point of this great concern, will put them on a par with the moſt wiſe and knowing.

If we do not take to our aid the foregone ſtudies of men reputed intelligent and learned, we ſhall be always beginners. But men muſt learn ſomewhere; and the new teachers mean no more than what they effect, as far as they ſucceed, that is, to deprive men of the benefit of the collected wiſdom of mankind, and to make them blind diſciples of their own particular preſumption. Talk to theſe deluded creatures (all the diſciples and moſt of the maſters) who are taught to think themſelves ſo newly fitted up and furniſhed, and you will find nothing in their houſes but the refuſe of *Knaves Acre*; nothing but the rotten ſtuff, worn out in the ſervice of deluſion and ſedition in all ages, and which being newly furbiſhed up, patched, and varniſhed, ſerves well enough for thoſe who being unacquainted with the conflict which has always been maintained between the ſenſe and the nonſenſe of mankind, know nothing of the former exiſtence and the antient refutation of the ſame follies. It is near two thouſand years ſince it has been obſerved, that theſe devices of ambition, avarice, and turbulence, were antiquated. They are, indeed, the moſt antient of all common places; common places, ſometimes of good and neceſſary cauſes; more frequently of the worſt, but which decide upon neither.—*Eadem ſemper cauſa, libido et avaritia, et mutandarum rerum amor.—Ceterum libertas et*

ſpecioſa nomina pretexuntur; nec quiſquam alienum ſervitium, et dominationem ſibi concupivit, ut non eadem iſta vocabula uſurparet.

Rational and experienced men, tolerably well know, and have always known, how to diſtinguiſh between true and falſe liberty; and between the genuine adherence and the falſe pretence to what is true. But none, except thoſe who are profoundly ſtudied, can comprehend the elaborate contrivance of a fabric fitted to unite private and public liberty with public force, with order, with peace, with juſtice, and, above all, with the inſtitutions formed for beſtowing permanence and ſtability through ages, upon this invaluable whole.

Place, for inſtance, before your eyes, ſuch a man as Monteſquieu. Think of a genius not born in every country, or every time; a man gifted by nature with a penetrating aquiline eye; with a judgment prepared with the moſt extenſive erudition; with an herculean robuſtneſs of mind, and nerves not to be broken with labour; a man who could ſpend twenty years in one purſuit. Think of a man, like the univerſal patriarch in Milton (who had drawn up before him in his prophetic viſion the whole ſeries of the generations which were to iſſue from his loins) a man capable of placing in review, after having brought together, from the eaſt, the weſt, the north, and the ſouth, from the coarſeneſs of the rudeſt barbariſm to the moſt refined and ſubtle civilization, all the ſchemes of government which had ever prevailed amongſt mankind, weighing, meaſuring, collating, and comparing them all, joining fact with theory, and calling into council, upon all this infinite aſſemblage of things, all the ſpeculations which have fatigued the underſtandings of profound reaſoners in all times!—Let us then conſider, that all theſe were but ſo many preparatory ſteps to qualify a

man, and ſuch a man, tinctured with no national prejudice, with no domeſtic affection, to admire, and to hold out to the admiration of mankind the conſtitution of England! And ſhall we Engliſhmen revoke to ſuch a ſuit? Shall we, when ſo much more than he has produced, remains ſtill to be underſtood and admired, inſtead of keeping ourſelves in the ſchools of real ſcience, chooſe for our teachers men incapable of being taught, whoſe only claim to know is, that they have never doubted; from whom we can learn nothing but their own indocility; who would teach us to ſcorn what in the ſilence of our hearts we ought to adore?

Different from them are all the great critics. They have taught us one eſſential rule. I think the excellent and philoſophic artiſt, a true judge, as well as a perfect follower of nature, Sir Joſhua Reynolds, has ſomewhere applied it, or ſomething like it, in his own profeſſion. It is this, That if ever we ſhould find ourſelves diſpoſed not to admire thoſe writers or artiſts, Livy and Virgil for inſtance, Raphael or Michael Angelo, whom all the learned had admired, not to follow our own fancies, but to ſtudy them until we know how and what we ought to admire; and if we cannot arrive at this combination of admiration with knowledge, rather to believe that we are dull, than that the reſt of the world has been impoſed on. It is as good a rule, at leaſt, with regard to this admired conſtitution. We ought to underſtand it according to our meaſure; and to venerate where we are not able preſently to comprehend.

Such admirers were our fathers to whom we owe this ſplendid inheritance. Let us improve it with zeal, but with fear. Let us follow our anceſtors, men not without a rational, though without an excluſive confidence in themſelves; who, by reſpecting the reaſon of others, who, by looking backward as well as forward, by the modeſty as well

well as by the energy of their minds, went on, inſenſibly drawing this conſtitution nearer and nearer to its perfection by never departing from its fundamental principles, nor introducing any amendment which had not a ſubſiſting root in the laws, conſtitution, and uſages of the kingdom. Let thoſe who have the truſt of political or of natural authority ever keep watch againſt the deſperate enterprizes of innovation: Let even their benevolence be fortified and armed. They have before their eyes the example of a monarch, inſulted, degraded, confined, depoſed; his family diſperſed, ſcattered, impriſoned; his wife inſulted to his face like the vileſt of the ſex, by the vileſt of all populace; himſelf three times dragged by theſe wretches in an infamous triumph; his children torn from him, in violation of the firſt right of nature, and given into the tuition of the moſt deſperate and impious of the leaders of deſperate and impious clubs; his revenues dilapidated and plundered; his magiſtrates murdered; his clergy proſcribed, perſecuted, famiſhed; his nobility degraded in their rank, undone in their fortunes, fugitives in their perſons; his armies corrupted and ruined; his whole people impoveriſhed, diſunited, diſſolved; whilſt through the bars of his priſon, and amidſt the bayonets of his keepers, he hears the tumult of two conflicting factions, equally wicked and abandoned, who agree in principles, in diſpoſitions, and in objects, but who tear each other to pieces about the moſt effectual means of obtaining their common end; the one contending to preſerve for a while his name, and his perſon, the more eaſily to deſtroy the royal authority—the other clamouring to cut off the name, the perſon, and the monarchy together, by one ſacrilegious execution. All this accumulation of calamity, the greateſt that ever fell upon one man, has fallen upon his head, becauſe he had left his virtues unguarded by caution; becauſe he

was

was not taught that where power is concerned, he who will confer benefits muſt take ſecurity againſt ingratitude.

I have ſtated the calamities which have fallen upon a great prince and nation, becauſe they were not alarmed at the approach of danger, and becauſe, what commonly happens to men ſurpriſed, they loſt all reſource when they were caught in it. When I ſpeak of danger, I certainly mean to addreſs myſelf to thoſe who conſider the prevalence of the new whig doctrines as an evil.

The whigs of this day have before them, in this Appeal, their conſtitutional anceſtors: They have the doctors of the modern ſchool. They will chooſe for themſelves. The author of the Reflections has choſen for himſelf. If a new order is coming on, and all the political opinions muſt paſs away as dreams, which our anceſtors have worſhipped as revelations, I ſay for him, that he would rather be the laſt (as certainly he is the leaſt) of that race of men, than the firſt and greateſt of thoſe who have coined to themſelves whig principles from a French die, unknown to the impreſs of our fathers in the conſtitution.

A LETTER

L E T T E R

P E N A L L A W S

A

LETTER

TO

A PEER OF IRELAND,

ON THE

PENAL LAWS

AGAINST

IRISH CATHOLICS;

PREVIOUS TO THE LATE REPEAL OF A PART THEREOF, IN THE SESSION OF THE IRISH PARLIAMENT, HELD A. D. 1782.

Charles-ſtreet, London, Feb. 21, 1782.

MY LORD,

I AM obliged to your lordſhip for your communication of the heads of Mr. Gardiner's bill. I had received it, in an earlier ſtage of its progreſs, from Mr. Braughall; and I am ſtill in that gentleman's debt, as I have not made him the proper return for the favour he has done me. Buſineſs, to which I was more immediately called, and in which my ſentiments had the weight of one vote, occupied me every moment ſince I received his letter. This firſt morning, which I can call my own, I give with great chearfulneſs to the ſubject on which your lordſhip has done me the honour of deſiring my opinion. I have read the heads of the bill, with the amendments. Your lordſhip is too well acquainted with men, and with affairs, to imagine that any true judgment can be formed on the value of a great meaſure of policy from the peruſal of a piece of paper. At preſent I am much in the dark with regard to the ſtate of the country, which the intended law is to be applied to*. It is not eaſy for me to determine whether or no it was wiſe (for the ſake of expunging the black letter of laws, which, menacing as they were in the language, were every day fading into diſuſe) ſolemnly to re-affirm the principles, and to re-enact the proviſions of a code of ſtatutes, by which you are totally excluded from THE PRIVILEGES OF THE COMMON-WEALTH, from the higheſt to the loweſt, from the moſt material of

* The ſketch of the bill ſent to Mr. Burke, along with the repeal of ſome acts, re-affirmed many others in the penal code. It was altered afterwards, and the clauſes re-affirming the incapacities left out; but they all ſtill exiſt, and are in full force.

the civil profeſſions, from the army, and even from education, where alone education is to be had.

Whether this ſcheme of indulgence, grounded at once on contempt and jealouſy, has a tendency gradually to produce ſomething better and more liberal, I cannot tell, for want of having the actual map of the country. If this ſhould be the caſe, it was right in you to accept it, ſuch as it is. But if this ſhould be one of the experiments, which have ſometimes been made before the temper of the nation was ripe for a real reformation, I think it may poſſibly have ill effects, by diſpoſing the penal matter in a more ſyſtematic order, and thereby fixing a permanent bar againſt any relief that is truly ſubſtantial. The whole merit or demerit of the meaſure depends upon the plans and diſpoſitions of thoſe by whom the act was made, concurring with the general temper of the Proteſtants of Ireland, and their aptitude to admit in time of ſome part of that equality, without which you never can be FELLOW-CITIZENS.—Of all this I am wholly ignorant. All my correſpondence with men of public importance in Ireland has for ſome time totally ceaſed. On the firſt bill for the relief of the ROMAN CATHOLICS of Ireland, I was, without any call of mine, conſulted both on your ſide of the water and on this. On the preſent occaſion, I have not heard a word from any man in office; and know as little of the intentions of the Britiſh government, as I know of the temper of the Iriſh parliament. I do not find that any oppoſition was made by the principal perſons of the minority in the houſe of commons, or that any is apprehended from them in the houſe of lords. The whole of the difficulty ſeems to lie with the principal men in government, under whoſe protection this bill is ſuppoſed to be brought in. This violent oppoſition and cordial ſupport, coming from one and the ſame quarter, appears to me ſomething myſterious, and hin-

ders

ders me from being able to make any clear judgment of the merit of the preſent meaſure, as compared with the actual ſtate of the country, and the general views of government, without which one can ſay nothing that may not be very erroneous.

To look at the bill, in the abſtract, it is neither more nor leſs than a renewed act of UNIVERSAL, UNMITIGATED, INDISPENSABLE, EXCEPTIONLESS DISQUALIFICATION.

One would imagine, that a bill, inflicting ſuch a multitude of incapacities, had followed on the heels of a conqueſt, made by a very fierce enemy, under the impreſſion of recent animoſity and reſentment. No man, on reading that bill, could imagine he was reading an act of amneſty and indulgence, following a recital of the good behaviour of thoſe who are the objects of it; which recital ſtood at the head of the bill, as it was firſt introduced: but, I ſuppoſe for its incongruity with the body of the piece, was afterwards omitted.—This I ſay on memory. It however ſtill recites the oath, and that Catholics ought to be conſidered as good and loyal ſubjects to his majeſty, his crown and government. Then follows an univerſal excluſion of thoſe GOOD and LOYAL ſubjects from every (even the loweſt) office of truſt and profit; from any vote at an election; from any privilege in a town corporate; from being even a freeman of ſuch a corporation; from ſerving on grand juries; from a vote at a veſtry; from having a gun in his houſe; from being a barriſter, attorney, or ſolicitor, &c. &c. &c.

This has ſurely much more the air of a table of proſcription, than an act of grace. What muſt we ſuppoſe the laws concerning thoſe *good* ſubjects to have been, of which this is a relaxation? I know well that there is a cant language current, about the difference between an excluſion from employments even to the moſt rigorous extent, and an excluſion from the natural benefits ariſing from a man's own

induſtry. I allow, that under ſome circumſtances, the difference is very material in point of juſtice, and that there are conſiderations which may render it adviſeable for a wiſe government to keep the leading parts of every branch of civil and military adminiſtration in hands of the beſt truſt: But a total excluſion from the common-wealth is a very different thing. When a government ſubſiſts (as governments formerly did) on an eſtate of its own, with but few and inconſiderable revenues drawn from the ſubject, then the few officers which exiſted in ſuch eſtabliſhments were naturally at the diſpoſal of that government which paid the ſalaries out of its own coffers. There an excluſive preference could hardly merit the name of proſcription. Almoſt the whole produce of a man's induſtry at that time remained in his own purſe to maintain his family. But times alter, and the *whole* eſtate of government is from private contribution. When a very great portion of the labour of individuals goes to the ſtate, and is by the ſtate again refunded to individuals, through the medium of offices, and in this circuitous progreſs from the private to the public, and from the public again to the private fund, the families from whom the revenue is taken are indemnified, and an equitable balance between the government and the ſubject is eſtabliſhed. But if a great body of the people who contribute to this ſtate lottery, are excluded from all the prizes, the ſtopping the circulation with regard to them may be a moſt cruel hardſhip, amounting in effect to being double and treble taxed; and it will be felt as ſuch to the very quick by all the families high and low of thoſe hundreds of thouſands, who are denied their chance in the returned fruits of their own induſtry. This is the thing meant by thoſe who look upon the public revenue only as a ſpoil; and will naturally wiſh to have as few as poſſible concerned in the diviſion of the

booty.

booty. If a ſtate ſhould be ſo unhappy as to think it cannot ſubſiſt without ſuch a barbarous proſcription, the perſons ſo proſcribed ought to be indemnified by the remiſſion of a large part of their taxes, by an immunity from the offices of public burden, and by an exemption from being preſſed into any military or naval ſervice.

Common ſenſe and common juſtice dictate this at leaſt, as ſome ſort of compenſation to a people for their ſlavery. How many families are incapable of exiſting, if the little offices of the revenue, and little military commiſſions are denied them! To deny them at home, and to make the happineſs of acquiring ſome of them ſomewhere elſe, felony, or high treaſon, is a piece of cruelty, in which, till very lately, I did not ſuppoſe this age capable of perſiſting. Formerly a ſimilarity of religion made a ſort of country for a man in ſome quarter or other. A refugee for religion was a protected character. Now, the reception is cold indeed: and therefore as the aſylum abroad is deſtroyed, the hardſhip at home is doubled. This hardſhip is the more intolerable, becauſe the profeſſions are ſhut up. The church is ſo of courſe. Much is to be ſaid on that ſubject, in regard to them, and to the proteſtant diſſenters. But that is a chapter by itſelf. I am ſure I wiſh well to that church, and think its miniſters among the very beſt citizens of your country. However ſuch as it is, a great walk in life is forbidden ground to ſeventeen hundred thouſand of the inhabitants of Ireland. Why are they excluded from the law? Do not they expend money in their ſuits? Why may not they indemnify themſelves, by profiting, in the perſons of ſome, for the loſſes incurred by others? Why may not they have perſons of confidence, whom they may, if they pleaſe, employ in the agency of their affairs? The excluſion from the law, from grand juries, from ſheriff-ſhips, and under-ſheriff-ſhips, as well

well as from freedom in any corporation, may ſubject them to dreadful hardſhips, as it may exclude them wholly from all that is beneficial, and expoſe them to all that is miſchievous in a trial by jury. This was manifeſtly within my own obſervation, for I was three times in Ireland from the year 1760 to the year 1767, where I had ſufficient means of information, concerning the inhuman proceedings (among which were many cruel murders, beſides an infinity of outrages and oppreſſions, unknown before in a civilized age) which prevailed during that period in conſequence of a pretended conſpiracy among *Roman Catholics* againſt the king's government. I could dilate upon the miſchiefs that may happen, from thoſe which have happened, upon this head of diſqualification, if it were at all neceſſary.

The head of excluſion from votes for members of parliament is cloſely connected with the former. When you caſt your eye on the ſtatute book, you will ſee that no *Catholic*, even in the ferocious acts of queen Anne, was diſabled from voting, on account of his religion. The only conditions required for that privilege, were the oaths of allegiance and abjuration—both oaths relative to a civil concern. Parliament has ſince added another oath of the ſame kind: and yet an houſe of commons adding to the ſecurities of government, in proportion as its danger is confeſſedly leſſened, and profeſſing both confidence and indulgence, in effect takes away the privilege left by an act full of jealouſy, and profeſſing perſecution.

The taking away of a vote is the taking away the ſhield which the ſubject has, not only againſt the oppreſſion of power, but that worſt of all oppreſſions, the perſecution of private ſociety, and private manners. No candidate for parliamentary influence is obliged to the leaſt attention towards them, either in cities or counties. On the contrary, if they

ſhould

ſhould become obnoxious to any bigotted or malignant people amongſt whom they live, it will become the intereſt of thoſe who court popular favour, to uſe the numberleſs means which always reſide in magiſtracy and influence, to oppreſs them. The proceedings in a certain county in Munſter, during the unfortunate period I have mentioned, read a ſtrong lecture on the cruelty of depriving men of that ſhield, on account of their ſpeculative opinions. The proteſtants of Ireland feel well and naturally on the hardſhip of being bound by laws in the enacting of which they do not directly or indirectly vote. The bounds of theſe matters are nice, and hard to be ſettled in theory, and perhaps they have been puſhed too far. But how they can avoid the neceſſary application of the principles they uſe in their diſputes with others, to their diſputes with their fellow citizens, I know not.

It is true, the words of this act do not create a diſability; but they clearly and evidently ſuppoſe it. There are few *Catholic* freeholders to take the benefit of the privilege, if they were permitted to partake it; but the manner in which this very right in freeholders at large is defended, is not on the idea that the freeholders do really and truly repreſent the people; but that all people being capable of obtaining freeholds, all thoſe, who, by their induſtry and ſobriety merit this privilege, have the means of arriving at votes. It is the ſame with the corporations.

The laws againſt foreign education are clearly the very worſt part of the old code. Beſides your laity, you have the ſucceſſion of about 4,000 clergymen to provide for. Theſe having no lucrative objects in proſpect, are taken very much out of the lower orders of the people. At home, they have no means whatſoever provided for their attaining a clerical education, or indeed any education at all. When I was

in Paris, about ſeven years ago, I looked at every thing, and lived with every kind of people, as well as my time admitted. I ſaw there the Iriſh college of the Lombard, which ſeemed to me a very good place of education, under excellent orders and regulations, and under the government of a very prudent and learned man (the late Dr. KELLY). This college was poſſeſſed of an annual fixed revenue of more than a thouſand pound a year; the greateſt part of which had ariſen from the legacies and benefactions of perſons educated in that college, and who had obtained promotions in France, from the emolument of which promotions they made this grateful return. One in particular I remember, to the amount of ten thouſand livres, annually, as it is recorded on the donor's monument in their chapel.

It has been the cuſtom of poor perſons in Ireland, to pick up ſuch knowledge of the Latin tongue as, under the general diſcouragements, and occaſional purſuits of magiſtracy, they were able to acquire; and receiving orders at home, were ſent abroad to obtain a clerical education. By officiating in petty chaplainſhips, and performing, now and then, certain offices of religion for ſmall gratuities, they received the means of maintaining themſelves, until they were able to complete their education. Through ſuch difficulties and diſcouragements, many of them have arrived at a very conſiderable proficiency, ſo as to be marked and diſtinguiſhed abroad. Theſe perſons afterwards, by being ſunk in the moſt abject poverty, deſpiſed and ill-treated by the higher orders among proteſtants, and not much better eſteemed or treated, even by the few perſons of fortune of their own perſuaſion; and contracting the habits and ways of thinking of the poor and uneducated, among whom they were obliged to live, in a few years retained little or no traces of the talents and acquirements, which diſtinguiſhed them in

the early period of their lives. Can we, with juſtice, cut them off from the uſe of places of education, founded, for the greater part, from the economy of poverty and exile, without providing ſomething that is equivalent at home?

Whilſt this reſtraint of foreign and domeſtic education was part of an horrible and impious ſyſtem of ſervitude, the members were well fitted to the body. To render men patient, under a deprivation of all the rights of human nature, every thing which could give them a knowledge or feeling of thoſe rights was rationally forbidden. To render humanity fit to be inſulted, it was fit that it ſhould be degraded. But when we profeſs to reſtore men to the capacity for property, it is equally irrational and unjuſt to deny them the power of improving their minds as well as their fortunes. Indeed, I have ever thought the prohibition of the means of improving our rational nature, to be the worſt ſpecies of tyranny that the inſolence and perverſeneſs of mankind ever dared to exerciſe. This goes to all men, in all ſituations, to whom education can be denied.

Your lordſhip mentions a propoſal which came from my friend the provoſt, whoſe benevolence and enlarged ſpirit I am perfectly convinced of; which is, the propoſal of erecting a few ſizerſhips in the college, for the education (I ſuppoſe) of * Roman Catholic clergymen. He certainly meant it well; but, coming from ſuch a man as he is, it is a ſtrong inſtance of the danger of ſuffering any deſcription of men to fall into entire contempt—The charities intended for them are not perceived to be freſh inſults; and the true nature of their wants and neceſſities being unknown, remedies, wholly unſuitable to the nature of their complaint are provided for

* It appears that Mr. Hutchinſon meant this only as one of the means for their relief in point of education.

them. It is to feed a ſick Gentoo with beef broth, and to foment his wounds with brandy. If the other parts of the univerſity were open to them, as well on the foundation as otherwiſe, the offering of ſizerſhips would be a proportioned part of a *general* kindneſs. But when every thing *liberal* is with-held, and only that which is *ſervile* is permitted, it is eaſy to conceive upon what footing they muſt be in ſuch a place.

Mr. Hutchinſon muſt well know the regard and honour I have for him; and he cannot think my diſſenting from him in this particular, ariſes from a diſregard of his opinion: it only ſhews that I think he has lived in Ireland. To have any reſpect for the character and perſon of a popiſh prieſt there——oh! 'tis an uphill work indeed. But until we come to reſpect what ſtands in a reſpectable light with others, we are very deficient in the temper which qualifies us to make any laws and regulations about them. It even diſqualifies us from being charitable to them with any effect or judgment.

When we are to provide for the education of any body of men, we ought ſeriouſly to conſider the particular functions they are to perform in life. A Roman Catholic clergyman is the miniſter of a very ritual religion: and by his profeſſion, ſubject to many reſtraints. His life is a life full of ſtrict obſervances, and his duties are of a laborious nature towards himſelf, and of the higheſt poſſible truſt towards others. The duty of confeſſion alone is ſufficient to ſet in the ſtrongeſt light the neceſſity of his having an appropriated mode of education. The theological opinions and peculiar rites of one religion never can be properly taught in univerſities, founded for the purpoſes and on the principles of another, which in many points are directly oppoſite. If a Roman Catholic clergyman, intended for celibacy, and the function

of confeſſion, is not ſtrictly bred in a ſeminary where theſe things are reſpected, inculcated and enforced, as ſacred, and not made the ſubject of deriſion and obloquy, he will be ill fitted for the former, and the latter will be indeed in his hands a terrible inſtrument.

There is a great reſemblance between the whole frame and conſtitution of the Greek and Latin churches. The ſecular clergy in the former, by being married, living under little reſtraint, and having no particular education ſuited to their function, are univerſally fallen into ſuch contempt, that they are never permitted to aſpire to the dignities of their own church. It is not held reſpectful to call them *papas*, their true and antient appellation, but thoſe who wiſh to addreſs them with civility, always call them *hieromonachi*. In conſequence of this diſrepect, which I venture to ſay, in ſuch a church, muſt be the conſequence of a ſecular life, a very great degeneracy from reputable chriſtian manners has taken place throughout almoſt the whole of that great member of the chriſtian church.

It was ſo with the Latin church, before the reſtraint on marriage. Even that reſtraint gave riſe to the greateſt diſorders before the council of Trent, which together with the emulation raiſed, and the good examples given by the reformed churches, wherever they were in view of each other, has brought on that happy amendment, which we ſee in the Latin communion, both at home and abroad.

The council of Trent has wiſely introduced the diſcipline of ſeminaries, by which prieſts are not truſted for a clerical inſtitution, even to the ſevere diſcipline of their colleges; but after they paſs through them, are frequently, if not for the greater part, obliged to paſs through peculiar methods, having their particular ritual function in view. It is in a great meaſure to this, and to ſimilar methods uſed in foreign

education,

education, that the Roman catholic clergy of Ireland, miſerably provided for, living among low and ill regulated people, without any diſcipline of ſufficient force to ſecure good manners, have been prevented from becoming an intolerable nuiſance to the country, inſtead of being, as I conceive they generally are, a very great ſervice to it.

The miniſters of proteſtant churches require a different mode of education, more liberal and more fit for the ordinary intercourſe of life. That religion having little hold on the minds of people by external ceremonies, and extraordinary obſervances, or ſeparate habits of living, the clergy make up the deficiency by cultivating their minds with all kinds of ornamental learning, which the liberal proviſion made in England and Ireland for the parochial clergy, (to ſay nothing of the ample church preferments, with little or no duties annexed) and the comparative lightneſs of parochial duties, enables the greater part of them in ſome conſiderable degree to accompliſh.

This learning, which I believe to be pretty general, together with an higher ſituation, and more chaſtened by the opinion of mankind, forms a ſufficient ſecurity for the morals of the eſtabliſhed clergy, and for their ſuſtaining their clerical character with dignity. It is not neceſſary to obſerve, that all theſe things are, however, collateral to their function; and that except in preaching, which may be and is ſupplied, and often beſt ſupplied, out of printed books, little elſe is neceſſary for a proteſtant miniſter, than to be able to read the Engliſh language; I mean for the exerciſe of his function, not to the qualification of his admiſſion to it. But a popiſh parſon in Ireland may do very well without any conſiderable claſſical erudition, or any proficiency in pure or mixed mathematics, or any knowledge of civil hiſtory. Even if the catholic clergy ſhould poſſeſs thoſe acquiſitions,

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as at firſt many of them do, they ſoon loſe them in the painful courſe of profeſſional and parochial duties: but they muſt have all the knowledge, and what is to them more important than the knowledge, the diſcipline neceſſary to thoſe duties. All modes of education, conducted by thoſe whoſe minds are caſt in another mould, as I may ſay, and whoſe original ways of thinking are formed upon the reverſe pattern, muſt be to them not only uſeleſs, but miſchievous. Juſt as I ſhould ſuppoſe the education in a popiſh eccleſiaſtical ſeminary would be ill fitted for a proteſtant clergyman. To educate a catholic prieſt in a proteſtant ſeminary would be much worſe. The proteſtant educated amongſt catholics has only ſomething to reject: what he keeps may be uſeful. But a catholic pariſh prieſt learns little for his peculiar purpoſe and duty in a proteſtant college.

All this, my lord, I know very well, will paſs for nothing with thoſe who wiſh that the popiſh clergy ſhould be illiterate, and in a ſituation to produce contempt and deteſtation. Their minds are wholly taken up with party ſquabbles, and I have neither leiſure nor inclination to apply any part of what I have to ſay, to thoſe who never think of religion, or of the common-wealth, in any other light, than as they tend to the prevalence of ſome faction in either. I ſpeak on a ſuppoſition, that there is a diſpoſition *to take the ſtate in the condition in which it is found*, and to improve it *in that ſtate* to the beſt advantage. Hitherto, the plan for the government of Ireland has been, to ſacrifice the civil proſperity of the nation to its religious improvement. But if people in power there, are at length come to entertain other ideas, they will conſider the good order, decorum, virtue, and morality of every deſcription of men among them, as of infinitely greater importance, than the ſtruggle (for it is nothing better) to change thoſe deſcriptions by means which

put

put to hazard, objects, which, in my poor opinion, are of more importance to religion and to the ſtate, than all the polemical matter which has been agitated among men from the beginning of the world to this hour.

On this idea, an education fitted *to each order and diviſion of men, ſuch as they are found*, will be thought an affair rather to be encouraged than diſcountenanced: and until inſtitutions at home, ſuitable to the occaſions and neceſſities of the people, are eſtabliſhed, and which are armed, as they are abroad, with authority to coerce the young men to be formed in them, by a ſtrict and ſevere diſcipline,—the means they have, at preſent, of a cheap and effectual education in other countries, ſhould not continue to be prohibited by penalties and modes of inquiſition, not fit to be mentioned to ears that are organized to the chaſte ſounds of equity and juſtice.

Before I had written thus far, I heard of a ſcheme of giving to the Caſtle the patronage of the preſiding members of the catholic clergy. At firſt I could ſcarcely credit it: for I believe it is the firſt time that the preſentation to other people's alms has been deſired in any country. If the ſtate provides a ſuitable maintenance and temporality for the governing members of the Iriſh Roman catholic church, and for the clergy under them, I ſhould think the project, however improper in other reſpects, to be by no means unjuſt. But to deprive a poor people, who maintain a ſecond ſet of clergy, out of the miſerable remains of what is left after taxing and tything—to deprive them of the diſpoſition of their own charities among their own communion, would, in my opinion, be an intolerable hardſhip. Never were the members of one religious ſect fit to appoint the paſtors to another. Thoſe who have no regard for their welfare, reputation, or internal quiet, will not appoint ſuch as are proper.

per. The ſeraglio of Conſtantinople is as equitable as we are, whether catholics or proteſtants: and where their own ſect is concerned, full as religious. But the ſport which they make of the miſerable dignities of the Greek church, the little factions of the haram, to which they make them ſubſervient, the continual ſale to which they expoſe and re-expoſe the ſame dignity, and by which they ſqueeze all the inferior orders of the clergy, is (for I have had particular means of being acquainted with it) nearly equal to all the other oppreſſions together, exerciſed by muſſulmen over the unhappy members of the Oriental church. It is a great deal to ſuppoſe that even the preſent Caſtle would nominate biſhops for the Roman church of Ireland, with a religious regard for its welfare. Perhaps they cannot, perhaps they dare not do it.

But ſuppoſe them to be as well inclined as I know that I am, to do the catholics all kind of juſtice, I declare I would not, if it were in my power, take that patronage on myſelf. —I know I ought not to do it. I belong to another community; and it would be intolerable uſurpation for me to affect ſuch authority, where I conferred no benefit, or even if I did confer (as in ſome degree the ſeraglio does) temporal advantages. But, allowing that the *preſent* Caſtle finds itſelf fit to adminiſter the government of a church which they ſolemnly forſwear, and forſwear with very hard words and many evil epithets, and that as often as they qualify themſelves for the power which is to give this very patronage, or to give any thing elſe that they deſire; yet they cannot inſure themſelves that a man like the late Lord Cheſterfield will not ſucceed to them. This man, while he was duping the credulity of papiſts with fine words in private, and commending their good behaviour during a rebellion in Great Britain, (as it well deſerved to be commended and rewarded)

was capable of urging penal laws againſt them in a ſpeech from the throne, and of ſtimulating with provocatives the wearied and half-exhauſted bigotry of the then parliament of Ireland. They ſet to work, but they were at a loſs what to do; for they had already almoſt gone through every contrivance which could *waſte the vigour* of their country: but, after much ſtruggle, they produced a child of their old age, the ſhocking and unnatural act about marriages, which tended to finiſh the ſcheme for making the people not only two diſtinct parties for ever, but keeping them as two diſtinct ſpecies in the ſame land. Mr. Gardiner's humanity was ſhocked at it, as one of the worſt parts of that truly barbarous ſyſtem, if one could well ſettle the preference, where almoſt all the parts were outrages on the rights of humanity, and the laws of nature.

Suppoſe an atheiſt, playing the part of a bigot, ſhould be in power again in that country, do you believe that he would faithfully and religiouſly adminiſter the truſt of appointing paſtors to a church, which, wanting every other ſupport, ſtands in tenfold need of miniſters who will be dear to the people committed to their charge, and who will exerciſe a really paternal authority amongſt them? But if the ſuperior power was always in a diſpoſition to diſpenſe conſcientiouſly, and like an upright truſtee and guardian of theſe rights which he holds for thoſe with whom he is at variance, has he the capacity and means of doing it? How can the lord lieutenant form the leaſt judgment of their merits, ſo as to diſcern which of the popiſh prieſts is fit to be made a biſhop? It cannot be: the idea is ridiculous.—He will hand them over to lords lieutenant of counties, juſtices of the peace, and other perſons, who, for the purpoſe of vexing and turning to deriſion this miſerable people, will pick out the worſt and moſt obnoxious they can find amongſt

the clergy, to ſet over the reſt. Whoever is complained againſt by his brother, will be conſidered as perſecuted: Whoever is cenſured by his ſuperior, will be looked upon as oppreſſed: Whoever is careleſs in his opinions, and looſe in his morals, will be called a liberal man, and will be ſuppoſed to have incurred hatred, becauſe he was not a bigot. Informers, tale-bearers, perverſe and obſtinate men, flatterers, who turn their back upon their flock, and court the proteſtant gentlemen of the country, will be the objects of preferment. And then I run no riſk in foretelling, that whatever order, quiet, and morality you have in the country, will be loſt. A popiſh clergy, who are not reſtrained by the moſt auſtere ſubordination, will become a nuiſance, a real public grievance of the heavieſt kind, in any country that entertains them: and inſtead of the great benefit which Ireland does, and has long derived from them, if they are educated without any idea of diſcipline and obedience, and then put under biſhops, who do not owe their ſtation to their good opinion, and whom they cannot reſpect, that nation will ſee diſorders, of which, bad as things are, it has yet no idea. I do not ſay this, as thinking the leading men in Ireland would exerciſe this truſt worſe than others. Not at all. No man, no ſet of men living are fit to adminiſter the affairs, or regulate the interior œconomy of a church to which they are enemies.

As to government, if I might recommend a prudent caution to them,—it would be, to innovate as little as poſſible, upon ſpeculation, in eſtabliſhments, from which, as they ſtand, they experience no material inconvenience to the repoſe of the country,—*quieta non movere*—I could ſay a great deal more; but I am tired; and am afraid your lordſhip is tired too. I have not ſat to this letter a ſingle quarter of an hour without interruption. It has grown long, and pro-

bably contains many repetitions, from my total want of leiſure to digeſt and conſolidate my thoughts: and as to my expreſſions, I could wiſh to be able perhaps to meaſure them more exactly. But my intentions are fair, and I certainly mean to offend nobody.

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Thinking over this matter more maturely, I ſee no reaſon for altering my opinion in any part. The act, as far as it goes, is good undoubtedly. It amounts, I think, very nearly to a *toleration*, with reſpect to religious ceremonies; but it puts a new bolt on civil rights, and rivets it to the old one, in ſuch a manner, that neither, I fear, will be eaſily looſened. What I could have wiſhed would be, to ſee the civil advantages take the lead; the other of a religious toleration, I conceive, would follow (in a manner) of courſe. From what I have obſerved, it is pride, arrogance, and a ſpirit of domination, and not a bigotted ſpirit of religion, that has cauſed and kept up thoſe oppreſſive ſtatutes. I am ſure I have known thoſe who have oppreſſed papiſts in their civil rights, exceedingly indulgent to them in their religious ceremonies, and who really wiſhed them to continue catholics, in order to furniſh pretences for oppreſſion. Theſe perſons never ſaw a man (by converting) eſcape out of their power, but with grudging and regret. I have known men, to whom I am not uncharitable in ſaying, (though they are dead) that they would have become papiſts in order to oppreſs proteſtants; if, being proteſtants, it was not in their power to oppreſs papiſts. It is injuſtice, and not a miſtaken conſcience, that has been the principle of perſecution, at leaſt as far as it has fallen under my obſervation. However, as I began, ſo I end. I do not know the map of the country.

Mr.

Mr. Gardiner, who conducts this great and difficult work, and thoſe who ſupport him, are better judges of the buſineſs than I can pretend to be, who have not ſet my foot in Ireland theſe ſixteen years. I have been given to underſtand, that I am not conſidered as a friend to that country: and I know that pains have been taken to leſſen the credit that I might have had there. * * * * * * * * *

I am ſo convinced of the weakneſs of interfering in any buſineſs, without the opinion of the people in whoſe buſineſs I interfere, that I do not know how to acquit myſelf of what I have now done.—I have the honour to be, with high regard and eſteem,

My Lord,

Your lordſhip's moſt obedient,

And humble ſervant, &c.

EDM^{D} BURKE.

A LETTER

A

LETTER

TO

SIR HERCULES LANGRISHE, BART. M. P.

ON THE SUBJECT OF

ROMAN CATHOLICS OF IRELAND,

AND THE

PROPRIETY OF ADMITTING THEM

TO THE

ELECTIVE FRANCHISE,

CONSISTENTLY WITH THE

PRINCIPLES OF THE CONSTITUTION

AS ESTABLISHED AT THE

REVOLUTION.

1792.

A LETTER, &c.

LETTER

A LETTER, &c.

MY DEAR SIR,

YOUR remembrance of me, with ſentiments of ſo much kindneſs, has given me the moſt ſincere ſatisfaction. It perfectly agrees with the friendly and hoſpitable reception which my ſon and I received from you, ſome time ſince, when after an abſence of twenty-two years, I had the happineſs of embracing you, among my few ſurviving friends.

I really imagined that I ſhould not again intereſt myſelf in any public buſineſs. I had, to the beſt of my moderate faculties, paid my club to the ſociety, which I was born in ſome way or other to ſerve; and I thought I had a right to put on my night-gown and ſlippers, and wiſh a cheerful evening to the good company I muſt leave behind. But if our reſolutions of vigour and exertion are ſo often broken or procraſtinated in the execution, I think we may be excuſed, if we are not very punctual in fulfilling our engagements to indolence and inactivity. I have indeed no power of action; and am almoſt a cripple, even with regard to thinking: but you deſcend with force into the ſtagnant pool; and you cauſe ſuch a fermentation, as to cure at leaſt one impotent creature of his lameneſs, though it cannot enable him either to run or to wreſtle.

You ſee by the paper I take * that I am likely to be long, with malice prepenſe. You have brought under my view a ſubject, always difficult, at preſent critical.——It has filled my thoughts, which I wiſh to lay open to you with the clearneſs and ſimplicity which your friendſhip demands from

* The letter is written on folio ſheets.

me. I thank you for the communication of your ideas. I ſhould be ſtill more pleaſed if they had been more your own. What you hint, I believe to be the caſe; that if you had not deferred to the judgment of others, our opinions would not differ more materially at this day, than they did when we uſed to confer on the ſame ſubject, ſo many years ago. If I ſtill perſevere in my old opinions, it is no ſmall comfort to me, that it is not with regard to doctrines properly yours, that I diſcover my indocility.

The caſe upon which your letter of the 10th of December turns, is hardly before me with preciſion enough, to enable me to form any very certain judgment upon it. It ſeems to be ſome plan of further indulgence propoſed for Catholics of Ireland. You obſerve, that your "general principles are "not changed, but *that times and circumſtances are altered.*" I perfectly agree with you, that times and circumſtances, conſidered with reference to the public, ought very much to govern our conduct; though I am far from ſlighting, when applied with diſcretion to thoſe circumſtances, general principles and maxims of policy. I cannot help obſerving, however, that you have ſaid rather leſs upon the inapplicability of your own old principles to the *circumſtances* that are likely to influence your conduct againſt theſe principles, than of the *general* maxims of ſtate, which I can very readily believe not to have great weight with you perſonally.

In my preſent ſtate of imperfect information, you will pardon the errors into which I may eaſily fall. The principles you lay down are, "that the Roman Catholics ſhould "enjoy every thing *under* the ſtate, but ſhould not be *the* "*ſtate itſelf.*" And you add, "that when you exclude "them from being *a part of the ſtate*, you rather conform "to the ſpirit of the age, than to any abſtract doctrine;" but you conſider the conſtitution as already eſtabliſhed—that our

our ſtate is proteſtant. "It was declared ſo at the revolu-
"tion. It was ſo provided in the acts for ſettling the ſuc-
"ceſſion of the crown:—the king's coronation oath was
"enjoined, in order to keep it ſo. The king, as firſt magiſ-
"trate of the ſtate, is obliged to take the oath of abjura-
"tion*, and to ſubſcribe the declaration; and, by laws ſub-
"ſequent, every other magiſtrate and member of the ſtate,
"legiſlative and executive, are bound under the ſame obli-
"gation."

As to the plan to which theſe maxims are applied, I cannot ſpeak, as I told you, poſitively about it. Becauſe, neither from your letter, nor from any information I have been able to collect, do I find any thing ſettled, either on the part of the Roman Catholics themſelves, or on that of any perſons who may wiſh to conduct their affairs in parliament. But if I have leave to conjecture, ſomething is in agitation towards admitting them, under *certain qualifications*, to have *ſome ſhare* in the election of members of parliament. This I underſtand is the ſcheme of thoſe who are entitled to come within your deſcription of perſons of conſideration, property, and character: and firmly attached to the king and conſtitution as by "law eſtabliſhed, with a grateful ſenſe of "your former conceſſions, and a patient reliance on the be-"nignity of parliament, for the further mitigation of the "laws that ſtill affect them."—As to the low, thoughtleſs, wild and profligate, who have joined themſelves with thoſe of other profeſſions, but of the ſame character; you are not to imagine, that, for a moment, I can ſuppoſe them to be met, with any thing elſe than the manly and enlightened energy of a firm government, ſupported by the united efforts of all virtuous men, if ever their proceedings ſhould become

* A ſmall errour of fact as to the abjuration oath; but of no importance in the argument.

ſo conſiderable as to demand its notice. I really think that ſuch aſſociations ſhould be cruſhed in their very commencement.

Setting, therefore, this caſe out of the queſtion, it becomes an object of very ſerious conſideration, whether, becauſe wicked men of *various* deſcriptions are engaged in ſeditious courſes, the rational, ſober, and valuable part of *one* deſcription ſhould not be indulged in their ſober and rational expectations? You, who have looked deeply into the ſpirit of the popery laws, muſt be perfectly ſenſible, that a great part of the preſent miſchief, which we abhor in common (if it at all exiſts) has ariſen from them. Their declared object was to reduce the Catholics of Ireland to a miſerable populace, without property, without eſtimation, without education. The profeſſed object was to deprive the few men who, in ſpite of thoſe laws, might hold or obtain any property amongſt them, of all ſort of influence or authority over the reſt. They divided the nation into two diſtinct bodies, without common intereſt, ſympathy, or connexion. One of theſe bodies was to poſſeſs *all* the franchiſes, *all* the property, *all* the education: the other was to be compoſed of drawers of water and cutters of turf for them. Are we to be aſtoniſhed, when, by the efforts of ſo much violence in conqueſt, and ſo much policy in regulation, continued without intermiſſion for near an hundred years, we had reduced them to a mob; that whenever they came to act at all, many of them would act exactly like a mob, without temper, meaſure, or foreſight? Surely it might be juſt now a matter of temperate diſcuſſion, whether you ought not apply a remedy to the real cauſe of the evil. If the diſorder you ſpeak of be real and conſiderable, you ought to raiſe an ariſtocratic intereſt; that is, an intereſt of property and education amongſt them: and to ſtrengthen by every prudent means, the authority and in-

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fluence of men of that deſcription. It will deſerve your beſt thoughts, to examine whether this can be done without giving ſuch perſons the means of demonſtrating to the reſt, that ſomething more is to be got by their temperate conduct, than can be expected from the wild and ſenſeleſs projects of thoſe, who do not belong to their body, who have no intereſt in their well being, and only wiſh to make them the dupes of their turbulent ambition.

If the abſurd perſons you mention find no way of providing for liberty, but by overturning this happy conſtitution, and introducing a frantic democracy, let us take care how we prevent better people from any rational expectations of partaking in the benefits of that conſtitution *as it ſtands*. The maxims you eſtabliſh cut the matter ſhort. They have no ſort of connexion with the good or the ill behaviour of the perſons who ſeek relief, or with the proper or improper means by which they ſeek it. They form a perpetual bar to all pleas and to all expectations.

You begin by aſſerting, that "the Catholics ought to enjoy all things *under* the ſtate, but that they ought not to "*be the ſtate*." A poſition which, I believe, in the latter part of it, and in the latitude there expreſſed, no man of common ſenſe has ever thought proper to diſpute: becauſe the contrary implies, that the ſtate ought to be in them *excluſively*. But before you have finiſhed the line, you expreſs yourſelf as if the other member of your propoſition, namely, that "they ought not to be *a part* of the ſtate," were neceſſarily included in your firſt—Whereas I conceive it to be as different, as a part is from the whole; that is juſt as different as poſſible. I know indeed, that it is common with thoſe who talk very differently from you, that is with heat and animoſity, to confound thoſe things, and to argue the admiſſion of the Catholics into any, however minute and ſubordi-

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nate parts of the ſtate, as a ſurrender into their hands of the whole government of the kingdom. To them I have nothing at all to ſay.

Wiſhing to proceed with a deliberative ſpirit and temper in ſo very ſerious a queſtion, I ſhall attempt to analyze, as well as I can, the principles you lay down, in order to fit them for the graſp of an underſtanding ſo little comprehenſive as mine—'State'—'Proteſtant'—'Revolution.' Theſe are terms, which, if not well explained, may lead us into many errors. In the word *State*, I conceive there is much ambiguity. The ſtate is ſometimes uſed to ſignify *the whole common-wealth*, comprehending all its orders, with the ſeveral privileges belonging to each. Sometimes it ſignifies only *the higher and ruling part* of the common-wealth; which we commonly call *the Government*. In the firſt ſenſe, to be under the ſtate, but not the ſtate itſelf, *nor any part of it*, that is to be nothing at all in the common-wealth, is a ſituation perfectly intelligible: but to thoſe who fill that ſituation, not very pleaſant, when it is underſtood. It is a ſtate of *civil ſervitude* by the very force of the definition. *Servorum non eſt reſpublica*, is a very old and a very true maxim. This ſervitude, which makes men *ſubject* to a ſtate without being *citizens*, may be more or leſs tolerable from many circumſtances: but theſe circumſtances, more or leſs favourable, do not alter the nature of the thing. The mildneſs by which abſolute maſters exerciſe their dominion, leaves them maſters ſtill. We may talk a little preſently of the manner in which the majority of the people of Ireland (the Catholics) are affected by this ſituation; which at preſent undoubtedly is theirs, and which you are of opinion, ought ſo to continue for ever.

In the other ſenſe of the word *State*, by which is underſtood the *Supreme Government* only, I muſt obſerve this

upon the queſtion: that to exclude whole claſſes of men entirely from this *part* of government, cannot be conſidered as *abſolute ſlavery*. It only implies a lower and degraded ſtate of citizenſhip; ſuch is (with more or leſs ſtrictneſs) the condition of all countries, in which an hereditary nobility poſſeſs the excluſive rule. This may be no bad mode of government; provided that the perſonal authority of individual nobles be kept in due bounds, that their cabals and factions are guarded againſt with a ſevere vigilance, and that the people, (who have no ſhare in granting their own money) are ſubjected to but light impoſitions, and are otherwiſe treated with attention, and with indulgence to their humours and prejudices.

The republic of Venice is one of thoſe which ſtrictly confines all the great functions and offices, ſuch as are truly *ſtate*-functions and *ſtate*-offices, to thoſe who, by hereditary right or admiſſion, are noble Venetians. But there are many offices, and ſome of them not mean nor unprofitable, which are reſerved for the *Citadini*. Of theſe all citizens of Venice are capable. The inhabitants of the *Terra firma*, who are mere ſubjects of conqueſt, that is, as you expreſs it, under the ſtate, but "not a part of it," are not, however, ſubjects in ſo very rigorous a ſenſe as not to be capable of numberleſs ſubordinate employments. It is indeed one of the advantages attending the narrow bottom of their ariſtocracy (narrow as compared with their acquired dominions, otherwiſe broad enough) that an excluſion from ſuch employments cannot poſſibly be made amongſt their ſubjects. There are, beſides, advantages in ſtates ſo conſtituted, by which thoſe who are conſidered as of an inferior race, are indemnified for their excluſion from the government and from noble employments. In all theſe countries, either by expreſs law, or by uſage more operative, the noble caſts are

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almoſt univerſally, in their turn, excluded from commerce, manufacture, farming of land, and in general from all lucrative civil profeſſions. The nobles have the monopoly of honour. The plebeians a monopoly of all the means of acquiring wealth. Thus ſome ſort of a balance is formed among conditions; a ſort of compenſation is furniſhed to thoſe, who, in a *limited ſenſe*, are excluded from the government of the ſtate.

Between the extreme of *a total excluſion*, to which your maxim goes, and *an univerſal unmodified capacity*, to which the fanatics pretend, there are many different degrees and ſtages, and a great variety of temperaments, upon which prudence may give full ſcope to its exertions. For you know that the deciſions of prudence (contrary to the ſyſtem of the inſane reaſoners) differ from thoſe of judicature; and that almoſt all the former are determined on the more or the leſs, the earlier or the later, and on a balance of advantage and inconvenience, of good and evil.

In all conſiderations which turn upon the queſtion of veſting or continuing the ſtate ſolely and excluſively in ſome one deſcription of citizens; prudent legiſlators will conſider, how far *the general form and principles of their commonwealth render it fit to be caſt into an oligarchical ſhape, or to remain always in it*. We know that the government of Ireland (the ſame as the Britiſh) is not in its conſtitution *wholly* ariſtocratical; and as it is not ſuch in its form, ſo neither is it in its ſpirit. If it had been inveterately ariſtocratical, excluſions might be more patiently ſubmitted to. The lot of one plebeian would be the lot of all; and an habitual reverence and admiration of certain families, might make the people content to ſee government wholly in hands to whom it ſeemed naturally to belong. But our conſtitution has *a plebeian member*, which forms an eſſential integrant

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part of it. A plebeian oligarchy is a monſter: and no people, not abſolutely domeſtic or predial ſlaves, will long endure it. The Proteſtants of Ireland are not *alone* ſufficiently the people to form a democracy; and they are *too numerous* to anſwer the ends and purpoſes of *an ariſtocracy*. Admiration, that firſt ſource of obedience, can be only the claim or the impoſture of the few. I hold it to be abſolutely impoſſible for two millions of plebeians, compoſing certainly, a very clear and decided majority in that claſs, to become ſo far in love with ſix or ſeven hundred thouſand of their fellow-citizens (to all outward appearance plebeians like themſelves, and many of them tradeſmen, ſervants, and otherwiſe inferior to ſome of them) as to ſee with ſatisfaction, or even with patience, an excluſive power veſted in them, by which *conſtitutionally* they become the abſolute maſters; and by the *manners* derived from their circumſtances, muſt be capable of exerciſing upon them, daily and hourly, an inſulting and vexatious ſuperiority. Neither are the majority of the Iriſh indemnified (as in ſome ariſtocracies) for this ſtate of humiliating vaſſalage (often inverting the nature of things and relations) by having the lower walks of induſtry wholly abandoned to them. They are rivalled, to ſay the leaſt of the matter, in every laborious and lucrative courſe of life: while every franchiſe, every honour, every truſt, every place down to the very loweſt and leaſt confidential (beſides whole profeſſions), is reſerved for the maſter caſt.

Our conſtitution is not made for great, general, and proſcriptive excluſions; ſooner or later, it will deſtroy them, or they will deſtroy the conſtitution. In our conſtitution there has always been a difference made between *a franchiſe* and *an office*, and between the capacity for the one and for the other. Franchiſes were ſuppoſed to belong to the *ſubject*,

as *a ſubject*, and not *as a member of the governing part of the ſtate*. The policy of government has conſidered them as things very different: for whilſt parliament excluded by the teſt acts (and for a while theſe teſt acts were not a dead letter, as now they are in England) proteſtant diſſenters from all civil and military employments, they *never touched their right of voting for members of parliment, or ſitting in either houſe*; a point I ſtate, not as approving or condemning, with regard to them, the meaſure of excluſion from employments, but to prove that the diſtinction has been admitted in legiſlature, as, in truth, it is founded in reaſon.

I will not here examine, whether the principles of the Britiſh [the Iriſh] conſtitution, be wiſe or not. I muſt aſſume that they are; and that thoſe who partake the franchiſes which make it, partake of a benefit. They who are excluded from votes (under proper qualifications inherent in the conſtitution that gives them) are excluded, not from the *ſtate*, but from *the Britiſh conſtitution*. They cannot by any poſſibility, whilſt they hear its praiſes continually rung in their ears, and are preſent at the declaration which is ſo generally and ſo bravely made by thoſe who poſſeſs the privilege—that the beſt blood in their veins ought to be ſhed, to preſerve their ſhare in it; they, the disfranchiſed part, cannot, I ſay, think themſelves in an *happy* ſtate, to be utterly excluded from all its direct and all its conſequential advantages. The popular part of the conſtitution muſt be to them, by far the moſt odious part of it. To them it is not *an actual*, and, if poſſible, ſtill leſs a *virtual* repreſentation. It is indeed the direct contrary. It is power unlimited, placed in the hands of *an adverſe* deſcription, *becauſe it is an adverſe deſcription*. And if they who compoſe the privileged body have not an intereſt, they muſt but too frequently have motives of pride, paſſion, petulance, peeviſh

jealouſy, or tyrannic ſuſpicion, to urge them to treat the excluded people with contempt and rigour.

This is not a mere theory; though whilſt men are men, it is a theory that cannot be falſe. I do not deſire to revive all the particulars in my memory; I wiſh them to ſleep for ever; but it is impoſſible I ſhould wholly forget, what happened in ſome parts of Ireland, with very few and ſhort intermiſſions, from the year 1761 to the year 1766, both inclusive. In a country of miſerable police, paſſing from the extremes of laxity to the extremes of rigour, among a neglected, and therefore diſorderly populace—if any diſturbance or ſedition, from any grievance real or imaginary, happened to ariſe, it was preſently perverted from its true nature, often criminal enough in itſelf to draw upon it a ſevere appropriate puniſhment; it was metamorphoſed into a conſpiracy againſt the ſtate, and proſecuted as ſuch. Amongſt the Catholics, as being, by far, the moſt numerous and the moſt wretched, all ſorts of offenders againſt the laws muſt commonly be found. The puniſhment of low people for the offences uſual amongſt low people, would warrant no inference againſt any deſcriptions of religion or of politicks. Men of conſideration from their age, their profeſſion, or their character; men of proprietary landed eſtates, ſubſtantial renters, opulent merchants, phyſicians, and titular biſhops, could not eaſily be ſuſpected of riot in open day, or of nocturnal aſſemblies for the purpoſe of pulling down hedges, making breaches in park walls, firing barns, maiming cattle, and outrages of a ſimilar nature, which characterize the diſorders of an oppreſſed or a licentious populace. But when the evidence given on the trial for ſuch miſdemeanours, qualified them as overt acts of high treaſon, and when witneſſes were found (ſuch witneſſes as they were) to depoſe to the taking of oaths of allegiance by the rioters to

the king of France, to their being paid by his money, and embodied and exerciſed under his officers, to overturn the ſtate for the purpoſes of that potentate; in that caſe, the rioters might (if the witneſs was believed) be ſuppoſed only the troops, and perſons more reputable, the leaders and commanders in ſuch a rebellion. All claſſes in the obnoxious deſcription, who could not be ſuſpected of the lower crime of riot, might be involved in the odium, in the ſuſpicion, and ſometimes in the puniſhment, of a higher and far more criminal ſpecies of offence. Theſe proceedings did not ariſe from any one of the Popery laws ſince repealed, but from this circumſtance, that when it anſwered the purpoſes of an election party, or a malevolent perſon of influence to forge ſuch plots, the people had no protection. The people of that deſcription have no hold on the gentlemen who aſpire to be popular repreſentatives. The candidates neither love, nor reſpect, nor fear them, individually or collectively. I do not think this evil (an evil amongſt a thouſand others) at this day entirely over; for I conceive I have lately ſeen ſome indication of a diſpoſition perfectly ſimilar to the old one; that is, a diſpoſition to carry the imputation of crimes from perſons to deſcriptions, and wholly to alter the character and quality of the offences themſelves.

This univerſal excluſion ſeems to me a ſerious evil—becauſe many collateral oppreſſions, beſides what I have juſt now ſtated, have ariſen from it. In things of this nature, it would not be either eaſy or proper to quote chapter and verſe: but I have great reaſon to believe, particularly ſince the octenial act, that ſeveral have refuſed at all to let their lands to Roman Catholics; becauſe it would ſo far diſable them from promoting ſuch intereſts in counties as they were inclined to favour. They who conſider alſo the ſtate of all ſorts of tradeſmen, ſhopkeepers, and particularly publicans

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in towns, muſt ſoon diſcern the diſadvantages under which thoſe labour who have no votes. It cannot be otherwiſe, whilſt the ſpirit of elections, and the tendencies of human nature continue as they are. If property be artificially ſeparated from franchiſe, the franchiſe muſt in ſome way or other, and in ſome proportion, naturally attract property to it. Many are the collateral diſadvantages, amongſt a *privileged* people, which muſt attend on thoſe who have *no* privileges.

Among the rich, each individual, with or without a franchiſe, is of importance; the poor and the middling are no otherwiſe ſo, than as they obtain ſome collective capacity, and can be aggregated to ſome corps. If legal ways are not found, illegal will be reſorted to; and ſeditious clubs and confederacies, ſuch as no man living holds in greater horror than I do, will grow and flouriſh, in ſpite, I am afraid, of any thing which can be done to prevent the evil. Lawful enjoyment is the ſureſt method to prevent unlawful gratification. Where there is property, there will be leſs theft; where there is marriage, there will always be leſs fornication.

I have ſaid enough of the queſtion of ſtate, *as it affects the people, merely as ſuch.* But it is complicated with a political queſtion relative to religion, to which it is very neceſſary I ſhould ſay ſomething; becauſe the term *Proteſtant*, which you apply, is too general for the concluſions which one of your accurate underſtanding would wiſh to draw from it; and becauſe a great deal of argument will depend on the uſe that is made of that term.

It is *not* a fundamental part of the ſettlement at the revolution, that the ſtate ſhould be proteſtant without *any qualification of the term.* With a qualification it is unqueſtionably true; not in all its latitude. With the qualification, it was true before the revolution. Our predeceſſors in legiſlation

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were not ſo irrational (not to ſay impious) as to form an operoſe eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment, and even to render the ſtate itſelf in ſome degree ſubſervient to it, when their religion (if ſuch it might be called) was nothing but a mere *negation* of ſome other—without any poſitive idea either of doctrine, diſcipline, worſhip, or morals, in the ſcheme which they profeſſed themſelves, and which they impoſed upon others, even under penalties and incapacities—No! No! This never could have been done even by reaſonable atheiſts. They who think religion of no importance to the ſtate have abandoned it to the conſcience, or caprice of the individual; they make no proviſion for it whatſoever, but leave every club to make, or not, a voluntary contribution towards its ſupport, according to their fancies. This would be conſiſtent. The other always appeared to me to be a monſter of contradiction and abſurdity. It was for that reaſon, that ſome years ago I ſtrenuouſly oppoſed the clergy who petitioned, to the number of about three hundred, to be freed from the ſubſcription to the 39 articles, without propoſing to ſubſtitute any other in their place. There never has been a religion of the ſtate (the few years of the parliament only excepted) but that of *the epiſcopal church of England*; the epiſcopal church of England, before the reformation, connected with the ſee of Rome, ſince then, diſconnected and proteſting againſt ſome of her doctrines, and againſt the whole of her authority, as binding in our national church: nor did the fundamental laws of this kingdom (in Ireland it has been the ſame) ever know, at any period, any other church *as an object of eſtabliſhment*; or in that light, any other Proteſtant religion. Nay our Proteſtant *toleration* itſelf at the revolution, and until within a few years, required a ſignature of thirty-ſix, and a part of a thirty-ſeventh, out of the thirty-nine articles. So little idea had they at the revolution of *eſtabliſhing* Proteſtantiſm

teſtantiſm indefinitely, that they did not indefinitely *tolerate* it under that name. I do not mean to praiſe that ſtrictneſs, where nothing more than merely religious toleration is concerned. Toleration being a part of moral and political prudence, ought to be tender and large. A tolerant government ought not to be too ſcrupulous in its inveſtigations; but may bear without blame, not only very ill-grounded doctrines, but even many things that are poſitively vices, where they are *adulta et prævalida*. The good of the commonwealth is the rule which rides over the reſt; and to this every other muſt completely ſubmit.

The church of Scotland knows as little of Proteſtantiſm *undefined*, as the church of England and Ireland do. She has by the articles of union ſecured to herſelf the perpetual eſtabliſhment of *the Confeſſion of Faith*, and the *Preſbyterian* church government. In England, even during the troubled interregnum, it was not thought fit to eſtabliſh a *negative* religion; but the parliament ſettled the *Preſbyterian*, as the church *diſcipline*; the *Directory*, as the rule of public *worſhip*; and the *Weſtminſter catechiſm*, as the inſtitute of *faith*. This is to ſhew, that at no time was the Proteſtant religion *undefined*, eſtabliſhed here, or any where elſe, as I believe. I am ſure that when the three religions were eſtabliſhed in Germany, they were expreſsly characterized and declared to be the *Evangelic*, the *Reformed*, and the *Catholic*; each of which has its confeſſion of faith, and its ſettled diſcipline; ſo that you always may know the beſt and the worſt of them, to enable you to make the moſt of what is good, and to correct, or to qualify, or to guard againſt whatever may ſeem evil or dangerous.

As to the coronation oath, to which you allude, as oppoſite to admitting a Roman Catholic to the uſe of any franchiſe whatſoever,

whatſoever, I cannot think that the king would be perjured if he gave his aſſent to any regulation which parliament might think fit to make, with regard to that affair. The king is bound by law, as clearly ſpecified in ſeveral acts of parliament, to be in communion with the church of England. It is a part of the tenure by which he holds his crown; and though no proviſion was made till the revolution, which could be called poſitive and valid in law, to aſcertain this great principle; I have always conſidered it as in fact fundamental, that the king of England ſhould be of the Chriſtian religion, according to the national legal church for the time being. I conceive it was ſo before the reformation. Since the reformation it became doubly neceſſary; becauſe the king is the head of that church; in ſome ſort an eccleſiaſtical perſon; and it would be incongruous and abſurd, to have the head of the church of one faith, and the members of another. The king may *inherit* the crown as a *Proteſtant*, but he cannot *hold it* according to law, without being a Proteſtant *of the church of England*.

Before we take it for granted, that the king is bound by his coronation oath, not to admit any of his Catholic ſubjects to the rights and liberties, which ought to belong to them as Engliſhmen (not as religioniſts) or to ſettle the conditions or proportions of ſuch admiſſion by an act of parliament, I wiſh you to place before your eyes that oath itſelf, as it is ſettled in the act of William and Mary.

" Will you to the utmoſt of your power maintain—The
" laws[1] of God, the true[2] profeſſion of the[3] goſpel—and The
" proteſtant[4] reformed religion *as it is eſtabliſhed by law.*—
" And will you preſerve[5] unto *biſhops* and clergy, and the

"churches committed to *their* charge, all ſuch rights and "privileges as by law do, or ſhall appertain to them, or any "of them.—All this I promiſe to do."

Here are the coronation engagements of the king. In them I do not find one word to preclude his majeſty from conſenting to any arrangement which parliament may make with regard to the civil privileges of any part of his ſubjects.

It may not be amiſs, on account of the light which it will throw on this diſcuſſion, to look a little more narrowly into the matter of that oath—in order to diſcover how far it has hitherto operated, or how far in future it ought to operate, as a bar to any proceedings of the crown and parliament in favour of thoſe, againſt whom it may be ſuppoſed that the king has engaged to ſupport the Proteſtant church of England, in the two kingdoms, in which it is eſtabliſhed by law. Firſt, the king ſwears he will maintain to the utmoſt of his power, "the laws of God." I ſuppoſe it means the natural moral laws.—Secondly, he ſwears to maintain, "the true "profeſſion of the goſpel." By which I ſuppoſe is underſtood *affirmatively* the Chriſtian religion.—Thirdly, that he will maintain "the Proteſtant reformed religion." This leaves me no power of ſuppoſition or conjecture; for that Proteſtant reformed religion is defined and deſcribed by the ſubſequent words, "eſtabliſhed by law," and in this inſtance to define it beyond all poſſibility of doubt, he "ſwears to "maintain the biſhops and clergy, and the churches com-"mitted to their charge," in their rights, preſent and future.

This oath as effectually prevents the king from doing any thing to the prejudice of the church in favour of ſectaries, Jews, Mahometans, or plain avowed infidels; as if he ſhould do the ſame thing in favour of the Catholics. You will ſee,

that it is the ſame Proteſtant church, ſo deſcribed, which the king is to maintain and communicate with, according to the act of ſettlement of the 12th and 13th of William III. The act of the 5th of Anne, made in proſpect of the union, is entitled "An act for ſecuring the church of England as by "law eſtabliſhed." It meant to guard the church implicitly againſt any other mode of Proteſtant religion which might creep in by means of the union. It proves beyond all doubt, that the legiſlature did not mean to guard the church on one part only, and to leave it defenceleſs and expoſed upon every other. This church, in that act, is declared to be "fundamental and eſſential" for ever, in the conſtitution of the united kingdom, ſo far as England is concerned; and I ſuppoſe as the law ſtands, even ſince the independence, it is ſo in Ireland.

All this ſhews, that the religion which the king is bound to maintain, has a poſitive part in it as well as a negative; and that the poſitive part of it (in which we are in perfect agreement with the Catholics and with the church of Scotland) is infinitely the moſt valuable and eſſential. Such an agreement we had with Proteſtant Diſſenters in England, of thoſe deſcriptions who came under the toleration act of king William and queen Mary; an act coeval with the revolution; and which ought, on the principles of the gentlemen who oppoſe the relief to the Catholics, to have been held ſacred and unalterable. Whether we agree with the preſent Proteſtant Diſſenters in the points at the revolution held eſſential and fundamental among Chriſtians, or in any other fundamental, at preſent it is impoſſible for us to know; becauſe, at their own very earneſt deſire, we have repealed the toleration act of William and Mary, and diſcharged them from the ſignature required by that act; and becauſe, for the

far greater part, they publicly declare againſt all manner of confeſſions of faith, even the *conſenſus*.

For reaſons forcible enough at all times, but at this time particularly forcible with me, I dwell a little the longer upon this matter, and take the more pains, to put us both in mind that it was not ſettled at the revolution, that the ſtate ſhould be proteſtant, in the latitude of the term, but in a defined and limited ſenſe only, and that, in that ſenſe only, the king is ſworn to maintain it. To ſuppoſe that the king has ſworn with his utmoſt power to maintain what it is wholly out of his power to diſcover, or which, if he could diſcover, he might diſcover to conſiſt of things directly contradictory to each other, ſome of them perhaps impious, blaſphemous, and ſeditious upon principle, would be not only a groſs, but a moſt miſchievous abſurdity. If mere diſſent from the church of Rome be a merit, he that diſſents the moſt perfectly is the moſt meritorious. In many points we hold ſtrongly with that church. He that diſſents throughout with that church will diſſent with the church of England, and then it will be a part of his merit that he diſſents with ourſelves :—a whimſical ſpecies of merit for any ſet of men to eſtabliſh. We quarrel to extremity with thoſe, who we know agree with us in many things, but we are to be ſo malicious even in the principle of our friendſhips, that we are to cheriſh in our boſom thoſe who accord with us in nothing, becauſe whilſt they deſpiſe ourſelves, they abhor even more than we do, thoſe with whom we have ſome diſagreement. A man is certainly the moſt perfect Proteſtant, who proteſts againſt the whole Chriſtian religion. Whether a perſon's having no Chriſtian religion be a title to favour, in excluſion to the largeſt deſcription of Chriſtians who hold all the doctrines of Chriſtianity, though holding along with them ſome errors and ſome ſuperfluities, is rather more

than any man who has not become recreant and apoſtate from his baptiſm, will, I believe, chooſe to affirm. The countenance given from a ſpirit of controverſy to that negative religion, may, by degrees, encourage light and unthinking people to a total indifference to every thing poſitive in matters of doctrine; and, in the end, of practice too. If continued, it would play the game of that ſort of active, proſelytizing, and perſecuting atheiſm, which is the diſgrace and calamity of our time, and which we ſee to be as capable of ſubverting a government, as any mode can be, of miſguided zeal for better things.

Now let us fairly ſee what courſe has been taken relative to thoſe, againſt whom, in part at leaſt, the king has ſworn to maintain a church, *poſitive in its doctrine and its diſcipline.* The firſt thing done, even when the oath was freſh in the mouth of the ſovereigns, was to give a toleration to Proteſtant Diſſenters, *whoſe doctrines they aſcertained.* As to the mere civil privileges which the Diſſenters held as ſubjects before the revolution, theſe were not touched at all. The laws have fully permitted, in a qualification for all offices, to ſuch Diſſenters, *an occaſional conformity*; a thing I believe ſingular, where teſts are admitted. The act called the Teſt Act itſelf, is, with regard to them, grown to be hardly any thing more than a dead letter. Whenever the Diſſenters ceaſe by their conduct to give any alarm to the government, in church and ſtate, I think it very probable that even this matter, rather diſguſtful than inconvenient to them, may be removed, or at leaſt ſo modified as to diſtinguiſh the qualification to thoſe offices which really *guide the ſtate*, from thoſe which are *merely inſtrumental*; or that ſome other and better teſts may be put in their place.

So far as to England. In Ireland you have outran us. Without waiting for an Engliſh example, you have totally,

and

and without any modification whatſoever, repealed the teſt as to Proteſtant Diſſenters. Not having the repealing act by me, I ought not to ſay poſitively that there is no exception in it; but if it be what I ſuppoſe it is, you know very well, that a Jew in religion, or a Mahometan, or even *a public, declared atheiſt*, and blaſphemer, is perfectly qualified to be lord lieutenant, a lord juſtice, or even keeper of the king's conſcience; and by virtue of his office (if with you it be as it is with us) adminiſtrator to a great part of the eccleſiaſtical patronage of the crown.

Now let us deal a little fairly. We muſt admit, that Proteſtant diſſent was one of the quarters from which danger was apprehended at the revolution, and againſt which a part of the coronation oath was peculiarly directed. By this unqualified repeal, you certainly did not mean to deny that it was the duty of the crown to preſerve the church againſt Proteſtant Diſſenters; or taking this to be the true ſenſe of the two revolution acts of king William, and of the previous and ſubſequent union acts of queen Anne, you did not declare by this moſt unqualified repeal, by which you broke down all the barriers, not invented, indeed, but carefully preſerved at the revolution; you did not then and by that proceeding declare, that you had adviſed the king to perjury towards God, and perfidy towards the church. No! far, very far from it! you never would have done it, if you did not think it could be done with perfect repoſe to the royal conſcience, and perfect ſafety to the national eſtabliſhed religion. You did this upon a full conſideration of the circumſtances of your country. Now if circumſtances required it, why ſhould it be contrary to the king's oath, his parliament judging on thoſe circumſtances, to reſtore to his Catholic people, in ſuch meaſure, and with ſuch modifications as the public wiſdom ſhall think proper to add, *ſome*

part

part in theſe franchiſes which they formerly had held without any limitation at all, and which, upon no ſort of urgent reaſon at the time, they were deprived of? If ſuch means can with any probability be ſhewn, from circumſtances, rather to add ſtrength to our mixed eccleſiaſtical and ſecular conſtitution, than to weaken it; ſurely they are means infinitely to be preferred to penalties, incapacities, and proſcriptions continued from generation to generation. They are perfectly conſiſtent with the other parts of the coronation oath, in which the king ſwears to maintain "the laws "of God and the true profeſſion of the goſpel, and to go- "vern the people according to the ſtatutes in Parliament "agreed upon, and the laws and cuſtoms of the realm." In conſenting to ſuch a ſtatute, the crown would act at leaſt as agreeable to the laws of God, and to the true profeſſion of the goſpel, and to the laws and cuſtoms of the kingdom, as George I. did when he paſſed the ſtatute which took from the body of the people, every thing which, to that hour, and even after the monſtrous acts of the 2d and 8th of Anne, (the objects of our common hatred) they ſtill enjoyed inviolate.

It is hard to diſtinguiſh with the laſt degree of accuracy, what laws are fundamental, and what not. However there is a diſtinction between them authorized by the writers on juriſprudence, and recognized in ſome of our ſtatutes. I admit the acts of king William and queen Anne to be fundamental, but they are not the *only* fundamental laws. The law called *Magna Charta*, by which it is provided, that "no "man ſhall be diſſeized of his liberties and free cuſtoms "but by the judgment of his peers, or the laws of the land" (meaning clearly for ſome proved crime tried and adjudged), I take to be a *fundamental law*. Now, although this Magna Charta, or ſome of the ſtatutes eſtabliſhing it, provide that

that

that law ſhall be perpetual, and all ſtatutes contrary to it ſhall be void, yet I cannot go ſo far as to deny the authority of ſtatutes made in defiance of Magna Charta and all its principles. This however I will ſay, that it is a very venerable law, made by very wiſe and learned men, and that the legiſlature in their attempt to perpetuate it, even againſt the authority of future parliaments, have ſhewn their judgment that it is *fundamental*, on the ſame grounds, and in the ſame manner that the act of the fifth of Anne has conſidered, and declared the eſtabliſhment of the church of England to be fundamental. Magna Charta, which ſecured theſe franchiſes to the ſubjects, regarded the rights of freeholders in counties to be as much a fundamental part of the conſtitution, as the eſtabliſhment of the church of England was thought either at that time, or in the act of king William, or in the act of queen Anne.

The churchmen, who led in that tranſaction, certainly took care of the material intereſt of which they were the natural guardians. It is the firſt article of Magna Charta, "that the church of England ſhall be free," &c. &c. But at that period churchmen, and barons, and knights, took care of the franchiſes and free cuſtoms of the people too. Thoſe franchiſes are part of the conſtitution itſelf, and inſeparable from it. It would be a very ſtrange thing if there ſhould not only exiſt, anomalies in our laws, a thing not eaſy to prevent, but, that the fundamental parts of the conſtitution ſhould be perpetually and irreconcileably at variance with each other. I cannot perſuade myſelf that the lovers of our church are not as able to find effectual ways of reconciling its ſafety with the franchiſes of the people, as the eccleſiaſtics of the thirteenth century were able to do; I cannot conceive how any thing worſe can be ſaid of the Proteſtant religion of the church of England than this, that wherever it is judged proper to give it a legal eſtabliſhment, it becomes

becomes neceſſary to deprive the body of the people, if they adhere to their old opinions, of "their liberties and of all "their free cuſtoms," and to reduce them to a ſtate of *civil* ſervitude.

There is no man on earth, I believe, more willing than I am to lay it down as a fundamental of the conſtitution, that the church of England ſhould be united and even identified with it: but allowing this, I cannot allow that all *laws of regulation*, made from time to time, in ſupport of that fundamental law, are, of courſe, equally fundamental and equally unchangeable. This would be to confound all the branches of legiſlation and of juriſprudence.—The *crown* and the perſonal ſafety of the monarch are *fundamentals* in our conſtitution: yet, I hope that no man regrets, that the rabble of ſtatutes got together during the reign of Henry the Eighth, by which treaſons are multiplied with ſo prolific an energy, have been all repealed in a body; although they were all, or moſt of them, made in ſupport of things truly fundamental in our conſtitution. So were ſeveral of the acts by which the crown exerciſed its ſupremacy; ſuch as the act of Elizabeth, for making the *high commiſſion courts*, and the like; as well as things made treaſon in the time of Charles II. None of this ſpecies of *ſecondary and ſubſidiary laws* have been held fundamental. They have yielded to circumſtances: particularly where they were thought, even in their conſequences, or obliquely, to affect other fundamentals. How much more, certainly, ought they to give way, when, as in our caſe, they effect, not here and there, in ſome particular point, or in their conſequence, but univerſally, collectively, and directly, the fundamental franchiſes of a people, equal to the whole inhabitants of ſeveral reſpectable kingdoms and ſtates; equal to the ſubjects of the kings of Sardinia or of Denmark; equal to thoſe of the United Netherlands; and more than are to be found in all the ſtates of Switzerland.

This way of proſcribing men by whole nations, as it were, from all the benefits of the conſtitution to which they were born, I never can believe to be politic or expedient, much leſs neceſſary for the exiſtence of any ſtate or church in the world. Whenever I ſhall be convinced, which will be late and reluctantly, that the ſafety of the church is utterly inconſiſtent with all the civil rights whatſoever of the far larger part of the inhabitants of our country, I ſhall be extremely ſorry for it; becauſe I ſhall think the church to be truly in danger. It is putting things into the poſition of an ugly alternative, into which, I hope in God, they never will be put.

I have ſaid moſt of what occurs to me on the topics you touch upon, relative to the religion of the king, and his coronation oath. I ſhall conclude the obſervations which I wiſhed to ſubmit to you on this point, by aſſuring you, that I think you the moſt remote that can be conceived from the metaphyſicians of our times, who are the moſt fooliſh of men, and who, dealing in univerſals and eſſences, ſee no difference between more and leſs; and who of courſe would think that the reaſon of the law which obliged the king to be a communicant of the church of England, would be as valid to exclude a Catholic from being an exciſeman, or to deprive a man who has five hundred a year, under that deſcription, from voting on a par with a factitious proteſtant diſſenting freeholder of forty ſhillings.

Recollect, my dear friend, that it was a fundamental principle in the French monarchy, whilſt it ſtood, that the ſtate ſhould be catholic; yet the edict of Nantz gave, not a full eccleſiaſtical, but a complete civil *eſtabliſhment*, with places of which only they were capable, to the calviniſts of France; and there were very few employments indeed of which they were not capable. The world praiſed the Cardinal de Rich-

lieu, who took the firſt opportunity to ſtrip them of their fortified places and cautionary towns. The ſame world held and does hold in execration (ſo far as that buſineſs is concerned) the memory of Louis the Fourteenth, for the total repeal of that favourable edict; though the talk of "fundamental laws, eſtabliſhed religion, religion of the prince, "ſafety to the ſtate," &c. &c. was then as largely held, and with as bitter a revival of the animoſities of the civil confuſions during the ſtruggles between the parties, as now they can be in Ireland.

Perhaps there are perſons who think that the ſame reaſon does not hold when the religious relation of the ſovereign and ſubject is changed; but they who have their ſhop full of falſe weights and meaſures, and who imagine that the adding or taking away the name of Proteſtant or Papiſt, Guelph or Ghibelline, alters all the principles of equity, policy, and prudence, leave us no common data upon which we can reaſon. I therefore paſs by all this, which on you will make no impreſſion, to come to what ſeems to be a ſerious conſideration in your mind; I mean the dread you expreſs of "reviewing, for the purpoſe of altering, the *principles of the* "*revolution*." This is an intereſting topic; on which I will, as fully as your leiſure and mine permits, lay before you the ideas I have formed.

Firſt, I cannot poſſibly confound in my mind all the things which were done at the revolution, with the *principles* of the revolution. As in moſt great changes, many things were done from the neceſſities of the time, well or ill underſtood from paſſion or from vengeance, which were not only, not perfectly agreeable to its principles, but in the moſt direct contradiction to them. I ſhall not think that the *deprivation of ſome millions of people of all the rights of citizens, and all intereſt in the conſtitution, in and to which they were born*, was a thing

a thing conformable to the *declared principles* of the revolution. This I am ſure is true relatively to England (where the operation of theſe *anti-principles* comparatively were of little extent), and ſome of our late laws, in repealing acts made immediately after the revolution, admit that ſome things then done were not done in the true ſpirit of the revolution. But the revolution operated differently in England and Ireland, in many, and theſe eſſential particulars. Suppoſing the principles to have been altogether the ſame in both kingdoms, by the application of thoſe principles to very different objects, the whole ſpirit of the ſyſtem was changed, not to ſay reverſed. In England it was the ſtruggle of the *great body* of the people for the eſtabliſhment of their liberties, againſt the efforts of a very *ſmall faction*, who would have oppreſſed them. In Ireland it was the eſtabliſhment of the power of the ſmaller number, at the expence of the civil liberties and properties of the far greater part; and at the expence of the political liberties of the whole. It was, to ſay the truth, not a revolution, but a conqueſt; which is not to ſay a great deal in its favour. To inſiſt on every thing done in Ireland at the revolution, would be to inſiſt on the ſevere and jealous policy of a conqueror, in the crude ſettlement of his new acquiſition, as a *permanent* rule for its future government. This, no power, in no country that ever I heard of, has done or profeſſed to do—except in Ireland; where it is done, and poſſibly by ſome people will be profeſſed. Time has, by degrees, in all other places and periods, blended and coalited the conquered with the conquerors. So, after ſome time, and after one of the moſt rigid conqueſts that we read of in hiſtory, the Normans ſoftened into the Engliſh. I wiſh you to turn your recollection to the fine ſpeech of Cerealis to the Gauls, made to diſſuade them from revolt. Speaking of the Romans,—"*Nos* quamvis toties laceſſiti, jure victoriæ id

" ſolum vobis addidimus, quo pacem tueremur; nam neque " quies gentium ſine armis; neque arma ſine ſtipendiis; " neque ſtipendia ſine tributis, haberi queant. *Cætera in* " *communi ſita ſunt:* ipſi plerumque noſtris exercitibus " *præſidetis:* ipſi has aliaſque provincias *regitis: nil ſeperatum* " *clauſumve*—Proinde pacem et urbem, quam *victores* " *victique eodem jure obtinemus*, amate, colite." You will conſider, whether the arguments uſed by that Roman to theſe Gauls, would apply to the caſe in Ireland; and whether you could uſe ſo plauſible a preamble to any ſevere warning you might think it proper to hold out to thoſe who ſhould reſort to ſedition inſtead of ſupplication, to obtain any object that they may purſue with the governing power.

For a much longer period than that which had ſufficed to blend the Romans with the nation to which of all others they were the moſt adverſe, the Proteſtants ſettled in Ireland, conſidered themſelves in no other light than that of a ſort of a colonial garriſon, to keep the natives in ſubjection to the other ſtate of Great Britain. The whole ſpirit of the revolution in Ireland, was that of not the mildeſt conqueror. In truth, the ſpirit of thoſe proceedings did not commence at that æra, nor was religion of any kind their primary object. What was done, was not in the ſpirit of a conteſt between two religious factions; but between two adverſe nations. The ſtatutes of Kilkenny ſhew, that the ſpirit of the popery laws, and ſome even of their actual proviſions, as applied between Engliſhry and Iriſhry, had exiſted in that haraſſed country before the words Proteſtant and Papiſt were heard of in the world. If we read baron Finglas, Spenſer, and Sir John Davis, we cannot miſs the true genius and policy of the Engliſh government there before the revolution, as well as during the whole reign of queen Elizabeth. Sir John Davis boaſts of the benefits received by the natives,

natives, by extending to them the Engliſh law, and turning the whole kingdom into ſhire ground. But the appearance of things alone was changed. The original ſcheme was never deviated from for a ſingle hour. Unheard-of confiſcations were made in the northern parts, upon grounds of plots and conſpiracies, never proved upon their ſuppoſed authors. The war of chicane ſucceeded to the war of arms and of hoſtile ſtatutes; and a regular ſeries of operations were carried on, particularly from Chicheſter's time, in the ordinary courts of juſtice, and by ſpecial commiſſions and inquiſitions; firſt, under pretence of tenures, and then of titles in the crown, for the purpoſe of the total extirpation of the intereſt of the natives in their own ſoil—until this ſpecies of ſubtle ravage, being carried to the laſt exceſs of oppreſſion and inſolence under lord Strafford, it kindled the flames of that rebellion which broke out in 1641. By the iſſue of that war, by the turn which the earl of Clarendon gave to things at the reſtoration, and by the total reduction of the kingdom of Ireland in 1691, the ruin of the native Iriſh, and in a great meaſure too, of the firſt races of the Engliſh, was completely accompliſhed. The new Engliſh intereſt was ſettled with as ſolid a ſtability as any thing in human affairs can look for. All the penal laws of that unparalleled code of oppreſſion, which were made after the laſt event, were manifeſtly the effects of national hatred and ſcorn towards a conquered people; whom the victors delighted to trample upon, and were not at all afraid to provoke. They were not the effect of their fears but of their ſecurity. They who carried on this ſyſtem, looked to the irreſiſtible force of Great Britain for their ſupport in their acts of power. They were quite certain, that no complaints of the natives would be heard on this ſide of the water, with any other ſentiments than thoſe of contempt and indignation.

tion. Their cries ſerved only to augment their torture. Machines, which could anſwer their purpoſes ſo well, muſt be of an excellent contrivance. Indeed in England, the double name of the complainants, Iriſh and Papiſts (it would be hard to ſay, ſingly, which ſingly was the moſt odious) ſhut up the hearts of every one againſt them. Whilſt that temper prevailed, and it prevailed in all its force to a time within our memory, every meaſure was pleaſing and popular, juſt in proportion as it tended to haraſs and ruin a ſet of people, who were looked upon as enemies to God and man; and indeed as a race of bigotted ſavages who were a diſgrace to human nature itſelf.

However, as the Engliſh in Ireland began to be domiciliated, they began alſo to recollect that they had a country. The *Engliſh intereſt*, at firſt by faint and almoſt inſenſible degrees, but at length openly and avowedly, became an *independent Iriſh intereſt*; full as independent as it could ever have been, if it had continued in the perſons of the native Iriſh; and it was maintained with more ſkill, and more conſiſtency than probably it would have been in theirs. With their views, the *Anglo-Iriſh* changed their maxims—it was neceſſary to demonſtrate to the whole people, that there was ſomething at leaſt, of a common intereſt, combined with the independency, which was to become the object of common exertions. The mildneſs of government produced the firſt relaxation towards the Iriſh; the neceſſities, and, in part too, the temper that predominated at this great change, produced the ſecond and the moſt important of theſe relaxations. Engliſh government, and Iriſh legiſlature felt jointly the propriety of this meaſure. The Iriſh parliament and nation became independent.

The true revolution to you, that which moſt intrinſically and ſubſtantially reſembled the Engliſh revolution of 1688, was

was the Iriſh revolution of 1782. The Iriſh parliament of 1782, bore little reſemblance to that which ſat in that kingdom, after the period of the firſt of theſe revolutions. It bore a much nearer reſemblance to that which ſat under king James. The change of the parliament in 1782 from the character of the parliament which, as a token of its indignation, had burned all the journals indiſcriminately of the former parliament in the council chamber, was very viſible. The addreſs of king William's parliament, the parliament which aſſembled after the revolution, amongſt other cauſes of complaint (many of them ſufficiently juſt), complains of the repeal by their predeceſſors of Poyning's law; no abſolute idol with the parliament of 1782.

Great Britain finding the Anglo-Iriſh highly animated with a ſpirit, which had indeed ſhewn itſelf before, though with little energy, and many interruptions, and therefore ſuffered a multitude of uniform precedents to be eſtabliſhed againſt it, acted in my opinion, with the greateſt temperance and wiſdom. She ſaw, that the diſpoſition of the *leading part* of the nation, would not permit them to act any longer the part of a *garriſon*. She ſaw, that true policy did not require that they ever ſhould have appeared in that character; or if it had done ſo formerly, the reaſons had now ceaſed to operate. She ſaw that the Iriſh of her race, were reſolved to build their conſtitution and their politics, upon another bottom. With thoſe things under her view, ſhe inſtantly complied with the whole of your demands, without any reſervation whatſoever. She ſurrendered that boundleſs ſuperiority, for the preſervation of which, and the acquiſition, ſhe had ſupported the Engliſh colonies in Ireland for ſo long a time, and at ſo vaſt an expence (according to the ſtandard of thoſe ages) of her blood and treaſure.

§ When

When we bring before us the matter which hiſtory affords for our ſelection, it is not improper to examine the ſpirit of the ſeveral precedents, which are candidates for our choice. Might it not be as well for your ſtateſmen, on the other ſide of the water, to take an example from this latter, and ſurely more conciliatory revolution, as a pattern for your conduct towards your own fellow-citizens, than from that of 1688, when a paramount ſovereignty over both you and them, was more loftily claimed, and more ſternly exerted, than at any former, or at any ſubſequent period? Great Britain in 1782, roſe above the vulgar ideas of policy, the ordinary jealouſies of ſtate, and all the ſentiments of national pride and national ambition. If ſhe had been more diſpoſed than, I thank God for it, ſhe was, to liſten to the ſuggeſtions of paſſion, than to the dictates of prudence; ſhe might have urged the principles, the maxims, the policy, the practice of the revolution, againſt the demands of the leading deſcription in Ireland, with full as much plauſibility, and full as good a grace, as any amongſt them can poſſibly do, againſt the ſupplications of ſo vaſt and extenſive a deſcription of their own people.

A good deal too, if the ſpirit of domination and excluſion had prevailed in England, might have been excepted againſt ſome of the means then employed in Ireland, whilſt her claims were in agitation. They were, at leaſt, as much out of ordinary courſe, as thoſe which are now objected againſt admitting your people to any of the benefits of an Engliſh conſtitution. Moſt certainly, neither with you, nor here, was any one ignorant of what was at that time ſaid, written, and done. But on all ſides we ſeparated the means from the end: and we ſeparated the cauſe of the moderate and rational, from the ill-intentioned and ſeditious; which on ſuch occaſions are ſo frequently apt to march together. At

that

that time, on your part, you were not afraid to review what was done at the revolution of 1688; and what had been continued during the ſubſequent flouriſhing period of the Britiſh empire. The change then made was a great and fundamental alteration. In the execution, it was an operoſe buſineſs on both ſides of the water. It required the repeal of ſeveral laws; the modification of many, and a new courſe to be given to an infinite number of legiſlative, judicial, and official practices and uſages in both kingdoms. This did not frighten any of us. You are now aſked to give, in ſome moderate meaſure, to your fellow-citizens, what Great Britain gave to you, without any meaſure at all. Yet, notwithſtanding all the difficulties at the time, and the apprehenſions which ſome very well-meaning people entertained, through the admirable temper in which this revolution (or reſtoration in the nature of a revolution) was conducted in both kingdoms, it has hitherto produced no inconvenience to either; and I truſt, with the continuance of the ſame temper, that it never will. I think that this ſmall inconſiderable change relative to an excluſive ſtatute not made at the revolution) for reſtoring the people to the benefits, from which the green ſoreneſs of a civil war had not excluded them, will be productive of no ſort of miſchief whatſoever. Compare what was done in 1782, with what is wiſhed in 1792; conſider the ſpirit of what has been done at the ſeveral periods of reformation; and weigh maturely, whether it be exactly true that conciliatory conceſſions are of good policy only in diſcuſſions between nations; but that among deſcriptions in the ſame nation, they muſt always be irrational and dangerous. What have you ſuffered in your peace, your proſperity, or, in what ought ever to be dear to a nation, your glory, by the laſt act by which you took the property of that people under the protection of the *laws*? What

reaſon have you to dread the conſequences of admitting the people poſſeſſing that property to ſome ſhare in the protection of the *conſtitution?*

I do not mean to trouble you with any thing to remove the objections, I will not call them arguments, againſt this meaſure, taken from a ferocious hatred to all that numerous deſcription of Chriſtians. It would be to pay a poor compliment to your underſtanding or your heart. Neither *your* religion, nor *your* politics conſiſt "in odd perverſe antipathies." You are not reſolved to perſevere in proſcribing from the conſtitution, ſo many millions of your countrymen, becauſe, in contradiction to experience and to common ſenſe, you think proper to imagine, that their principles are ſubverſive of common human ſociety. To that I ſhall only ſay, that whoever has a temper, which can be gratified by indulging himſelf in theſe good-natured fancies, ought to do a great deal more. For an excluſion from the privileges of Britiſh ſubjects, is not a cure for ſo terrible a diſtemper of the human mind, as they are pleaſed to ſuppoſe in their countrymen. I rather conceive a participation in thoſe privileges to be itſelf a remedy for ſome mental diſorders.

As little ſhall I detain you with matters that can as little obtain admiſſion into a mind like yours; ſuch as the fear, or pretence of fear, that in ſpite of your own power, and the trifling power of Great Britain, you may be conquered by the pope; or that this commodious bugbear (who is of infinitely more uſe to thoſe who pretend to fear, than to thoſe who love him) will abſolve his majeſty's ſubjects from their allegiance, and ſend over the cardinal of York to rule you as his viceroy; or that, by the plenitude of his power, he will take that fierce tyrant, the king of the French, out of his jail, and arm that nation (which on all occaſions treats his holineſs ſo very politely) with his bulls and pardons, to

invade poor old Ireland, to reduce you to popery and ſlavery, and to force the free-born, naked feet of your people into the wooden ſhoes of that arbitrary monarch. I do not believe that diſcourſes of this kind are held, or that any thing like them will be held, by any who walk about without a keeper. Yet, I confeſs, that on occaſions of this nature, I am the moſt afraid of the weakeſt reaſonings; becauſe they diſcover the ſtrongeſt paſſions. Theſe things will never be brought out in definite propoſitions. They would not prevent pity towards any perſons; they would only cauſe it for thoſe who were capable of talking in ſuch a ſtrain. But I know, and am ſure, that ſuch ideas as no man will diſtinctly produce to another, or hardly venture to bring in any plain ſhape to his own mind—he will utter in obſcure, ill-explained doubts, jealouſies, ſurmiſes, fears, and apprehenſions; and that in ſuch a fog, they will appear to have a good deal of ſize, and will make an impreſſion; when, if they were clearly brought forth and defined, they would meet with nothing but ſcorn and deriſion.

There is another way of taking an objection to this conceſſion, which I admit to be ſomething more plauſible, and worthy of a more attentive examination. It is, that this numerous claſs of people is mutinous, diſorderly, prone to ſedition, and eaſy to be wrought upon by the inſidious arts of wicked and deſigning men; that conſcious of this, the ſober, rational, and wealthy part of that body, who are totally of another character, do by no means deſire any participation for themſelves, or for any one elſe of their deſcription, in the franchiſes of the Britiſh conſtitution.

I have great doubt of the exactneſs of any part of this obſervation. But let us admit that the body of the Catholics are prone to ſedition (of which, as I have ſaid, I entertain much doubt), is it poſſible, that any fair obſerver or fair

reaſoner, can think of confining this deſcription to them only? I believe it to be poſſible for men to be mutinous and ſeditious who feel no grievance: but I believe no man will aſſert ſeriouſly, that when people are of a turbulent ſpirit, the beſt way to keep them in order, is to furniſh them with ſomething ſubſtantial to complain of.

You ſeparate very properly the ſober, rational, and ſubſtantial part of their deſcription from the reſt. You give, as you ought to do, weight only to the former. What I have always thought of the matter is this—that the moſt poor, illiterate, and uninformed creatures upon earth, are judges of a *practical* oppreſſion. It is a matter of feeling; and as ſuch perſons generally have felt moſt of it, and are not of an over-lively ſenſibility, they are the beſt judges of it. But for the *real cauſe*, or the *appropriate remedy*, they ought never to be called into council about the one or the other. They ought to be totally ſhut out; becauſe their reaſon is weak; becauſe when once rouſed, their paſſions are ungoverned; becauſe they want information; becauſe the ſmallneſs of the property which individually they poſſeſs, renders them leſs attentive to the conſequence of the meaſures they adopt in affairs of moment. When I find a great cry amongſt the people, who ſpeculate little, I think myſelf called ſeriouſly to examine into it, and to ſeparate the real cauſe from the ill effects of the paſſion it may excite; and the bad uſe which artful men may make of an irritation of the popular mind. Here we muſt be aided by perſons of a contrary character; we muſt not liſten to the deſperate or the furious; but it is therefore neceſſary for us to diſtinguiſh who are the *really* indigent, and the *really* intemperate. As to the perſons who deſire this part in the conſtitution, I have no reaſon to imagine that they are men who have nothing to loſe and much to look for in public confuſion. The popular meeting from which

which apprehenſions have been entertained, has aſſembled. I have accidentally had converſation with two friends of mine, who know ſomething of the gentleman who was put into the chair upon that occaſion; one of them has had money tranſactions with him; the other, from curioſity, has been to ſee his concerns: they both tell me he is a man of ſome property; but you muſt be the beſt judge of this, who by your office are likely to know his tranſactions. Many of the others are certainly perſons of fortune; and all, or moſt, fathers of families, men in reſpectable ways of life, and ſome of them far from contemptible, either for their information, or for the abilities which they have ſhewn in the diſcuſſion of their intereſts. What ſuch men think it for their advantage to acquire, ought not, *prima facia*, to be conſidered as raſh or heady, or incompatible with the public ſafety or welfare.

I admit, that men of the beſt fortunes and reputations, and of the beſt talents and education too, may, by accident, ſhew themſelves furious and intemperate in their deſires. This is a great misfortune when it happens; for the firſt preſumptions are undoubtedly in their favour. We have two ſtandards of judging in this caſe of the ſanity and ſobriety of any proceedings; of unequal certainty indeed, but neither of them to be neglected: the firſt is by the value of the object ſought, the next is by the means through which it is purſued.

The object purſued by the Catholics is, I underſtand, and have all along reaſoned as if it were ſo, in ſome degree or meaſure to be again admitted to the franchiſes of the conſtitution. Men are conſidered as under ſome derangement of their intellects, when they ſee good and evil in a different light from other men; when they chooſe nauſeous and unwholeſome food; and reject ſuch as to the reſt of the world ſeems

ſeems pleaſant, and is known to be nutritive. I have always conſidered the Britiſh conſtitution, not to be a thing in itſelf ſo vitious, as that none but men of deranged underſtanding, and turbulent tempers could deſire a ſhare in it: on the contrary, I ſhould think very indifferently of the underſtanding and temper of any body of men, who did not wiſh to partake of this great and acknowledged benefit. I cannot think quite ſo favourably either of the ſenſe or temper of thoſe, if any ſuch there are, who would voluntarily perſuade their brethren that the object is not fit for them, or they for the object. Whatever may be my thoughts concerning them, I am quite ſure, that they who hold ſuch language, muſt forfeit all credit with the reſt. This is infallible—If they conceive any opinion of their judgment, they cannot poſſibly think them their friends. There is, indeed, one ſuppoſition, which would reconcile the conduct of ſuch gentlemen to ſound reaſon, and to the pureſt affection towards their fellow-ſufferers; it is, that they act under the impreſſion of a well-grounded fear for the general intereſt. If they ſhould be told, and ſhould believe the ſtory, that if they dare attempt to make their condition better, they will infallibly make it worſe—that if they aim at obtaining liberty, they will have their ſlavery doubled—that their endeavour to put themſelves upon any thing which approaches towards an equitable footing with their fellow-ſubjects, will be conſidered as an indication of a ſeditious and rebellious diſpoſition—ſuch a view of things ought perfectly to reſtore the gentlemen, who ſo anxiouſly diſſuade their countrymen from wiſhing a participation with the privileged part of the people, to the good opinion of their fellows. But what is to *them* a very full juſtification, is not quite ſo honourable to that power from whoſe maxims and temper ſo good a ground of rational terror is furniſhed. I think

think arguments of this kind will never be uſed by the friends of a government which I greatly reſpect; or by any of the leaders of an oppoſition whom I have the honour to know, and the ſenſe to admire. I remember Polybius tells us, that during his captivity in Italy as a Peloponneſian hoſtage—he ſolicited old Cato to intercede with the ſenate for his releaſe, and that of his countrymen: this old politician told him that he had better continue in his preſent condition, however irkſome, than apply again to that formidable authority for their relief; that he ought to imitate the wiſdom of his countryman Ulyſſes, who, when he was once out of the den of the Cyclops, had too much ſenſe to venture again into the ſame cavern. But I conceive too high an opinion of the Iriſh legiſlature to think that they are to their fellow citizens, what the grand oppreſſors of mankind were to a people whom the fortune of war had ſubjected to their power. For though Cato could uſe ſuch a parallel with regard to his ſenate, I ſhould really think it nothing ſhort of impious, to compare an Iriſh parliament to a den of Cyclops. I hope the people, both here and with you, will always apply to the houſe of commons with becoming modeſty; but at the ſame time with minds unembarraſſed with any ſort of terror.

As to the means which the Catholics employ to obtain this object, ſo worthy of ſober and rational minds. I do admit that ſuch means may be uſed in the purſuit of it, as may make it proper for legiſlature, in this caſe, to defer their compliance until the demandants are brought to a proper ſenſe of their duty. A conceſſion in which the governing power of our country loſes its dignity, is dearly bought even by him who obtains his object. All the people have a deep intereſt in the dignity of parliament. But, as the refuſal of franchiſes which are drawn out of the firſt

vital

vital ſtamina of the Britiſh conſtitution, is a very ſerious thing, we ought to be very ſure, that the manner and ſpirit of the application is offenſive and dangerous indeed, before we ultimately reject all applications of this nature. The mode of application, I hear, is by petition. It is the manner in which all the ſovereign powers of the world are approached; and I never heard (except in the caſe of James the Second) that any prince conſidered this manner of ſupplication to be contrary to the humility of a ſubject, or to the reſpect due to the perſon or authority of the ſovereign. This rule, and a correſpondent practice, are obſerved, from the Grand Seignior, down to the moſt petty prince, or republic in Europe.

You have ſent me ſeveral papers, ſome in print, ſome in manuſcript. I think I had ſeen all of them, except the formula of aſſociation. I confeſs they appear to me to contain matter miſchievous, and capable of giving alarm, if the ſpirit in which they are written ſhould be found to make any conſiderable progreſs. But I am at a loſs to know how to apply them, as objections to the caſe now before us. When I find that *the general committee* which acts for the Roman Catholics in Dublin, prefers the aſſociation propoſed in the written draft you have ſent me, to a reſpectful application in parliament, I ſhall think the perſons who ſign ſuch a paper, to be unworthy of any privilege which may be thought fit to be granted; and that ſuch men ought, *by name*, to be excepted from any benefit under the conſtitution to which they offer this violence. But I do not find that this form of a ſeditious league has been ſigned by any perſon whatſoever, either on the part of the ſuppoſed projectors, or on the part of thoſe whom it is calculated to ſeduce. I do not find, on enquiry, that ſuch a thing was mentioned, or even remotely alluded to, in the general meeting

of

of the Catholics, from which ſo much violence was apprehended. I have conſidered the other publications, ſigned by individuals, on the part of certain ſocieties—I may miſtake, for I have not the honour of knowing them perſonally, but I take Mr. Butler and Mr. Tandy not to be Catholics, but members of the eſtabliſhed church. Not *one* that I recollect of theſe publications, which you and I equally diſlike, appears to be written by perſons of that perſuaſion. Now, if, whilſt a man is dutifully ſoliciting a favour from parliament, any perſon ſhould chuſe, in an improper manner, to ſhew his inclination towards the cauſe depending; and if that *muſt* deſtroy the cauſe of the petitioner; then, not only the petitioner, but the legiſlature itſelf, is in the power of any weak friend or artful enemy, that the ſupplicant, or that the parliament may have. A man muſt be judged by his own actions only. Certain proteſtant diſſenters make ſeditious propoſitions to the Catholics, which it does not appear that they have yet accepted. It would be ſtrange that the tempter ſhould eſcape all puniſhment, and that he who, under circumſtances full of ſeduction and full of provocation, has reſiſted the temptation, ſhould incur the penalty. You know, that, with regard to the diſſenters, who are *ſtated* to be the chief movers in this vile ſcheme of altering the principles of election to a right of voting by the head, you are not able (if you ought even to wiſh ſuch a thing) to deprive them of any part of the franchiſes and privileges which they hold on a footing of perfect equality with yourſelves. *They* may do what they pleaſe with conſtitutional impunity; but the others cannot even liſten with civility to an invitation from them to an ill-judged ſcheme of liberty, without forfeiting, for ever, all hopes of any of thoſe liberties which we admit to be ſober and rational.

It is known, I believe, that the greater, as well as the ſounder part of our excluded countrymen, have not adopted the wild ideas, and wilder engagements, which have been held out to them; but have rather choſen to hope ſmall and ſafe conceſſions from the legal power, than boundleſs objects from trouble and confuſion. This mode of action ſeems to me to mark men of ſobriety, and to diſtinguiſh them from thoſe who are intemperate, from circumſtance or from nature. But why do they not inſtantly diſclaim and diſavow thoſe who make ſuch advances to them? In this too, in my opinion, they ſhew themſelves no leſs ſober and circumſpect. In the preſent moment, nothing ſhort of inſanity could induce them to take ſuch a ſtep. Pray conſider the circumſtances. Diſclaim, ſays ſomebody, all union with the diſſenters;—right—But, when this your injunction is obeyed, ſhall I obtain the object which I ſolicit from *you*?—Oh, no, nothing at all like it!—But, in puniſhing us by an excluſion from the conſtitution through the great gate, for having been invited to enter into it by a poſtern, will you puniſh by deprivation of their privileges, or mulct in any other way, thoſe who have tempted us?—Far from it—we mean to preſerve all *their* liberties and immunities, as *our* life blood. We mean to cultivate *them*, as brethren whom we love and reſpect—with *you*, we have no fellowſhip. We can bear, with patience, their enmity to ourſelves; but their friendſhip with you, we will not endure. But mark it well! All our quarrels with *them*, are always to be revenged upon you. Formerly, it is notorious, that we ſhould have reſented with the higheſt indignation, your preſuming to ſhew any ill-will to them. You muſt not ſuffer them, now, to ſhew any good-will to you. Know—and take it once for all—that it is, and ever has been, and ever will be, a fundamental maxim in our politics, that you are not to have any part, or ſhadow, or

name

name of intereſt whatever, in our ſtate. That we look upon you, as under an irreverſible outlawry from our conſtitution —as perpetual and unalliable aliens.

Such, my dear Sir, is the plain nature of the argument drawn from the revolution maxims, enforced by a ſuppoſed diſpoſition in the Catholics to unite with the diſſenters. Such it is, though it were clothed in never ſuch bland and civil forms, and wrapped up, as a poet ſays, in a thouſand "artful folds of ſacred lawn." For my own part, I do not know in what manner to ſhape ſuch arguments, ſo as to obtain admiſſion for them into a rational underſtanding. Every thing of this kind is to be reduced, at laſt, to threats of power.—I cannot ſay *væ victis*, and then throw the ſword into the ſcale. I have no ſword; and if I had, in this caſe moſt certainly I would not uſe it as a make-weight in political reaſoning.

Obſerve, on theſe principles, the difference between the procedure of the parliament and the diſſenters, towards the people in queſtion. One employs courtſhip, the other force. The diſſenters offer bribes, the parliament nothing but the *front negatif* of a ſtern and forbidding authority. A man may be very wrong in his ideas of what is good for him. But no man affronts me, nor can therefore juſtify my affronting him, by offering to make me as happy as himſelf, according to his own ideas of happineſs. This the diſſenters do to the Catholics. You are on the different extremes. The diſſenters offer, with regard to conſtitutional rights and civil advantages of all ſorts, *every thing*—you refuſe *every thing*. With them, there is boundleſs, though not very aſſured hope; with you, a very ſure and very unqualified deſpair. The terms of alliance, from the diſſenters, offer a repreſentation of the commons, choſen out of the people by the head. This is abſurdly and dangerouſly large, in my opi-

nion; and that ſcheme of election is known to have been, at all times, perfectly odious to me. But I cannot think it right of courſe, to puniſh the Iriſh Roman Catholics by an univerſal excluſion, becauſe others, whom you would not puniſh at all, propoſe an univerſal admiſſion. I cannot diſſemble to myſelf, that, in this very kingdom, many perſons who are not in the ſituation of the Iriſh Catholics, but who, on the contrary, enjoy the full benefit of the conſtitution as it ſtands, and ſome of whom, from the effect of their fortunes, enjoy it in a large meaſure, had ſome years ago aſſociated to procure great and undefined changes (they conſidered them as reforms) in the popular part of the conſtitution. Our friend, the late Mr. Flood (no ſlight man) propoſed in his place, and in my hearing, a repreſentation not much leſs extenſive than this, for England; in which every houſe was to be inhabited by a voter—*in addition* to all the actual votes by other titles (ſome of the corporate) which we know do not require a houſe, or a ſhed. Can I forget that a perſon of the very higheſt rank, of very large fortune, and of the firſt claſs of ability, brought a bill into the houſe of lords, in the head-quarters of ariſtocracy, containing identically the ſame project, for the ſuppoſed adoption of which by a club or two, it is thought right to extinguiſh all hopes in the Roman Catholics of Ireland? I cannot ſay it was very eagerly embraced, or very warmly purſued. But the lords neither did diſavow the bill, nor treat it with any diſregard, nor expreſs any ſort of diſapprobation of its noble author, who has never loſt, with king or people, the leaſt degree of the reſpect and conſideration which ſo juſtly belongs to him.

I am not at all enamoured, as I have told you, with this plan of repreſentation; as little do I reliſh any bandings or aſſociations for procuring it. But if the queſtion was to be put to you and me—*univerſal* popular repreſentation, or *none at*

all

all for us and ours—we ſhould find ourſelves in a very awkward poſition. I do not like this kind of dilemmas, eſpecially when they are practical.

Then, ſince our oldeſt fundamental laws follow, or rather couple, freehold with franchiſe; ſince no principle of the revolution ſhakes theſe liberties; ſince the oldeſt and one of the beſt monuments of the conſtitution, demands for the Iriſh the privilege which they ſupplicate; ſince the principles of the revolution coincide with the declarations of the Great Charter; ſince the practice of the revolution, in this point, did not contradict its principles; ſince, from that event, twenty-five years had elapſed, before a domineering party, on a party principle, had ventured to disfranchiſe, without any proof whatſoever of abuſe, the greater part of the community; ſince the king's coronation oath does not ſtand in his way to the performance of his duty to all his ſubjects; ſince you have given to all other diſſenters theſe privileges without limit, which are hitherto withheld, without any limitation whatſoever, from the Catholics; ſince no nation in the world has ever been known to exclude ſo great a body of men (not born ſlaves) from the civil ſtate, and all the benefits of its conſtitution; the whole queſtion comes before parliament, as a matter for its prudence. I do not put the thing on a queſtion of right. That diſcretion which in judicature is well ſaid by lord Coke to be a crooked cord, in legiſlature is a golden rule. Supplicants ought not to appear too much in the character of litigants. If the ſubject thinks ſo highly and reverently of the ſovereign authority, as not to claim any thing of right, ſo that it may ſeem to be independent of the power and free choice of its government: and if the ſovereign, on his part, conſiders the advantages of the ſubjects as their right, and all their reaſonable wiſhes as ſo many claims; in the fortunate conjunction of theſe

mutual

mutual diſpoſitions are laid the foundations of a happy and proſperous commonwealth. For my own part, deſiring of all things that the authority of the legiſlature under which I was born, and which I cheriſh, not only with a dutiful awe, but with a partial and cordial affection, to be maintained in the utmoſt poſſible reſpect, I never will ſuffer myſelf to ſuppoſe, that, at bottom, their diſcretion will be found to be at variance with their juſtice.

The whole being at diſcretion, I beg leave juſt to ſuggeſt ſome matters for your conſideration—Whether the government in church or ſtate is likely to be more ſecure by continuing cauſes of grounded diſcontent, to a very great number (ſay two millions) of the ſubjects? or, Whether the conſtitution, combined and balanced as it is, will be rendered more ſolid, by depriving ſo large a part of the people of all concern, or intereſt, or ſhare, in its repreſentation, actual or *virtual?* I here mean to lay an emphaſis on the word *virtual.* Virtual repreſentation is that in which there is a communion of intereſts, and a ſympathy in feelings and deſires between thoſe who act in the name of any deſcription of people, and the people in whoſe name they act, though the truſtees are not actually choſen by them. This is virtual repreſentation. Such a repreſentation I think to be, in many caſes, even better than the actual. It poſſeſſes moſt of its advantages, and is free from many of its inconveniences: it corrects the irregularities in the literal repreſentation, when the ſhifting current of human affairs, or the acting of public intereſts in different ways, carry it obliquely from its firſt line of direction. The people may err in their choice; but common intereſt and common ſentiment are rarely miſtaken. But this ſort of virtual repreſentation cannot have a long or ſure exiſtence, if it has not a ſubſtratum in the actual. The member muſt have ſome relation to the conſtituent. As things

ſtand,

ſtand, the Catholic, as a Catholic and belonging to a deſcription, has no *virtual* relation to the repreſentative; but the *contrary*. There is a relation in mutual obligation. Gratitude may not always have a very laſting power; but the frequent recurrence of an application for favours will revive and refreſh it, and will neceſſarily produce ſome degree of mutual attention. It will produce, at leaſt, acquaintance. The ſeveral deſcriptions of people will not be kept ſo much apart as they now are, as if they were not only ſeparate nations, but ſeparate ſpecies. The ſtigma and reproach, the hideous maſk will be taken off, and men will ſee each other as they are. Sure I am, that there have been thouſands in Ireland, who have never converſed with a Roman Catholic in their whole lives, unleſs they happened to talk to their gardener's workmen, or to aſk their way, when they had loſt it, in their ſports; or, at beſt, who had known them only as footmen, or other domeſtics of the ſecond and third order: and ſo averſe were they, ſome time ago, to have them near their perſons, that they would not employ even thoſe who could never find their way beyond the ſtable. I well remember a great, and, in many reſpects, a good man, who advertiſed for a blackſmith; but, at the ſame time, added, he muſt be a Proteſtant. It is impoſſible that ſuch a ſtate of things, though natural goodneſs in many perſons will undoubtedly make exceptions, muſt not produce alienation on the one ſide, and pride and inſolence on the other.

Reduced to a queſtion of diſcretion, and that diſcretion exerciſed ſolely upon what will appear beſt for the conſervation of the ſtate on its preſent baſis, I ſhould recommend it to your ſerious thoughts, whether the narrowing of the foundation is always the beſt way to ſecure the building? The body of diſfranchiſed men will not be perfectly ſatisfied to remain always in that ſtate. If they are not ſatisfied, you have

have two millions of ſubjects in your boſom, full of uneaſineſs; not that they cannot overturn the act of ſettlement, and put themſelves and you under an arbitrary maſter; or, that they are not permitted to ſpawn an hydra of wild republics, on principles of a pretended natural equality in man; but, becauſe you will not ſuffer them to enjoy the antient, fundamental, tried advantages of a Britiſh conſtitution: that you will not permit them to profit of the protection of a common father, or the freedom of common citizens: and that the only reaſon which can be aſſigned for this disfranchiſement, has a tendency more deeply to ulcerate their minds than the act of excluſion itſelf. What the conſequence of ſuch feelings muſt be, it is for you to look to. To warn, is not to menace.

I am far from aſſerting, that men will not excite diſturbances without juſt cauſe. I know that ſuch an aſſertion is not true. But, neither is it true that diſturbances have never juſt complaints for their origin. I am ſure that it is hardly prudent to furniſh them with ſuch cauſes of complaint, as every man who thinks the Britiſh conſtitution a benefit, may think, at leaſt, colourable and plauſible.

Several are in dread of the manœuvres of certain perſons among the diſſenters, who turn this ill humour to their own ill purpoſes. You know, better than I can, how much theſe proceedings of certain among the diſſenters are to be feared. You are to weigh, with the temper which is natural to you, whether it may be for the ſafety of our eſtabliſhment, that the Catholics ſhould be ultimately perſuaded that they have no hope to enter into the conſtitution, but through the diſſenters.

Think, whether this be the way to prevent, or diſſolve factious combinations againſt the church, or the ſtate. Reflect ſeriouſly on the poſſible conſequences of keeping, in the heart

heart of your country, a bank of diſcontent, every hour accumulating, upon which every deſcription of ſeditious men may draw at pleaſure. They, whoſe principles of faction would diſpoſe them to the eſtabliſhment of an arbitrary monarchy, will find a nation of men who have no ſort of intereſt in freedom; but who will have an intereſt in that equality of juſtice or favour, with which a wiſe deſpot muſt view all his ſubjects who do not attack the foundations of his power. Love of liberty itſelf may, in ſuch men, become the means of eſtabliſhing an arbitrary domination. On the other hand, they who wiſh for a democratic republic, will find a ſet of men who have no choice between civil ſervitude, and the entire ruin of a mixed conſtitution.

Suppoſe the people of Ireland divided into three parts; of theſe (I ſpeak within compaſs) two are Catholic. Of the remaining third, one half is compoſed of Diſſenters. There is no natural union between thoſe deſcriptions. It may be produced. If the two parts Catholic be driven into a cloſe confederacy with half the third part of Proteſtants, with a view to a change in the conſtitution in church or ſtate, or both; and you reſt the whole of their ſecurity on a handful of gentlemen, clergy, and their dependants; compute the ſtrength *you have in Ireland*, to oppoſe to grounded diſcontent; to capricious innovation; to blind popular fury, and to ambitious turbulent intrigue.

You mention that the minds of ſome gentlemen are a good deal heated: and that it is often ſaid, that, rather than ſubmit to ſuch perſons having a ſhare in their franchiſes, they would throw up their independence, and precipitate an union with Great Britain. I have heard a diſcuſſion concerning ſuch an union amongſt all ſorts of men ever ſince I remember any thing. For my own part, I have never been able to bring my mind to any thing clear and deciſive upon the ſubject.

There cannot be a more arduous queſtion. As far as I can form an opinion, it would not be for the mutual advantage of the two kingdoms. Perſons however more able than I am, think otherwiſe. But, whatever the merits of this union may be, to make it a *menace*, it muſt be ſhewn to be an *evil*; and an evil more particularly to thoſe who are threatened with it, than to thoſe who hold it out as a terror. I really do not ſee how this threat of an union can operate, or that the Catholics are more likely to be loſers by that meaſure than the churchmen.

The humours of the people, and of politicians too, are ſo variable in themſelves and are ſo much under the occaſional influence of ſome leading men, that it is impoſſible to know what turn the public mind here would take on ſuch an event. There is but one thing certain concerning it. Great diviſions and vehement paſſions would precede this union, both on the meaſure itſelf and on its terms; and particularly, this very queſtion of a ſhare in the repreſentation for the Catholics, from whence the project of an union originated, would form a principal part in the diſcuſſion; and in the temper in which ſome gentlemen ſeem inclined to throw themſelves, by a ſort of high indignant paſſion, into the ſcheme, thoſe points would not be deliberated with all poſſible calmneſs.

From my beſt obſervation, I ſhould greatly doubt, whether, in the end, theſe gentlemen would obtain their object, ſo as to make the excluſion of two millions of their countrymen a fundamental article in the union. The demand would be of a nature quite unprecedented. You might obtain the union: and, yet a gentleman who, under the new union eſtabliſhment, would aſpire to the honour of repreſenting his county, might poſſibly be as much obliged, as he may fear to be, under the old ſeparate eſtabliſhment, to

the unſupportable mortification of aſking his neighbours, who have a different opinion concerning the elements in the ſacrament, for their votes.

I believe, nay, I am ſure, that the people of Great Britain, with or without an union, might be depended upon, in caſes of any real danger, to aid the government of Ireland, with the ſame cordiality as they would ſupport their own, againſt any wicked attempts to ſhake the ſecurity of the happy conſtitution in church and ſtate. But, before Great Britain engages in any quarrel, the *cauſe of the diſpute* would certainly be a part of her conſideration. If confuſions ſhould ariſe in that kingdom, from too ſteady an attachment to a proſcriptive monopolizing ſyſtem, and from the reſolution of regarding the franchiſe, and, in it the ſecurity of the ſubject, as belonging rather to religious opinions than to civil qualification and civil conduct, I doubt whether you might quite certainly reckon on obtaining an aid of force from hence, for the ſupport of that ſyſtem. We might extend your diſtractions to this country, by taking part in them. England will be indiſpoſed, I ſuſpect, to ſend an an army for the conqueſt of Ireland. What was done in 1782 is a deciſive proof of her ſentiments of juſtice and moderation. She will not be fond of making another American war in Ireland. The principles of ſuch a war would but too much reſemble the former one. The well-diſpoſed and the ill-diſpoſed in England, would (for different reaſons perhaps) be equally averſe to ſuch an enterprize. The confiſcations, the public auctions, the private grants, the plantations, the tranſplantations, which formerly animated ſo many adventurers, even among ſober citizens, to ſuch Iriſh expeditions, and which poſſibly might have animated ſome of them to the American, can have no exiſtence in the caſe that we ſuppoſe.

Let us form a ſuppoſition (no fooliſh or ungrounded ſuppoſition) that in an age, when men are infinitely more diſpoſed to heat themſelves with political than religious controverſies, the former ſhould entirely prevail, as we ſee that in ſome places they have prevailed, over the latter: and that the Catholics of Ireland, from the courtſhip paid them on the one hand, and the high tone of refuſal on the other, ſhould, in order to enter into all the rights of ſubjects, all become Proteſtant Diſſenters; and as the others do, take all your oaths. They would all obtain their civil objects; and the change, for any thing I know to the contrary, (in the dark as I am about the Proteſtant Diſſenting tenets) might be of uſe to the health of their ſouls. But, what ſecurity our conſtitution, in church or ſtate, could derive from that event, I cannot poſſibly diſcern. Depend upon it, it is as true as nature is true, that if you force them out of the religion of habit, education, or opinion, it is not to yours they will ever go. Shaken in their minds, they will go to that where the dogmas are feweſt; where they are the moſt uncertain; where they lead them the leaſt to a conſideration of what they have abandoned. They will go to that uniformly democratic ſyſtem, to whoſe firſt movements they owed their emancipation. I recommend you ſeriouſly to turn this in your mind. Believe that it requires your beſt and matureſt thoughts. Take what courſe you pleaſe—union or no union; whether the people remain Catholics, or become Proteſtant Diſſenters, ſure it is, that the preſent ſtate of monopoly *cannot* continue.

If England were animated, as I think ſhe is not, with her former ſpirit of domination, and with the ſtrong theological hatred which ſhe once cheriſhed for that deſcription of her fellow-chriſtians and fellow-ſubjects; I am yet convinced, that, after the fulleſt ſucceſs in a ruinous ſtruggle, you

would be obliged finally to abandon that monopoly. We were obliged to do this, even when every thing promiſed ſucceſs in the American buſineſs. If you ſhould make this experiment at laſt, under the preſſure of any neceſſity, you never can do it well. But if, inſtead of falling into a paſſion, the leading gentlemen of the country themſelves ſhould undertake the buſineſs cheerfully, and with hearty affection towards it, great advantages would follow. What is forced, cannot be modified; but here, you may meaſure your conceſſions.

It is a conſideration of great moment, that you may make the deſired admiſſion, without altering the ſyſtem of your repreſentation in the ſmalleſt degree, or in any part. You may leave that deliberation of a parliamentary change or reform, if ever you ſhould think fit to engage in it, uncomplicated and unembarraſſed with the other queſtion. Whereas, if they are mixed and confounded, as ſome people attempt to mix and confound them, no one can anſwer for the effects on the conſtitution itſelf.

There is another advantage in taking up this buſineſs, ſingly and by an arrangement for the ſingle object. It is, that you may proceed by *degrees*. We muſt all obey the great law of change. It is the moſt powerful law of nature, and the means perhaps of its conſervation. All we can do, and that human wiſdom can do, is to provide that the change ſhall proceed by inſenſible degrees. This has all the benefits which may be in change, without any of the inconveniences of mutation. Every thing is provided for as it arrives. This mode will, on the one hand, prevent the *unfixing old intereſts at once*; a thing which is apt to breed a black and ſullen diſcontent, in thoſe who are at once diſpoſſeſſed of all their influence and conſideration. This gradual courſe, on the other ſide, will prevent men, long under

under depreſſion, from being intoxicated with a large draught of new power, which they always abuſe with a licentious inſolence. But, wiſhing, as I do, the change to be gradual and cautious, I would, in my firſt ſteps, lean rather to the ſide of enlargement than reſtriction.

It is one excellence of our conſtitution, that all our rights of provincial election regard rather property than perſon. It is another, that the rights which approach more nearly to the perſonal, are moſt of them corporate, and ſuppoſe a reſtrained and ſtrict education of ſeven years in ſome uſeful occupation. In both caſes the practice may have ſlid from the principle. The ſtandard of qualification in both caſes may be ſo low, or not ſo judiciouſly choſen, as in ſome degree to fruſtrate the end. But all this is for your prudence in the caſe before you. You may riſe, a ſtep or two, the qualification of the Catholic voters. But if you were, to-morrow, to put the Catholic freeholder on the footing of the moſt favoured forty-ſhilling Proteſtant Diſſenter, you know that, ſuch is the actual ſtate of Ireland, this would not make a ſenſible alteration in almoſt any *one* election in the kingdom. The effect in their favour, even defenſively, would be infinitely ſlow. But it would be healing; it would be ſatisfactory and protecting. The ſtigma would be removed. By admitting ſettled permanent ſubſtance in lieu of the numbers, you would avoid the great danger of our time, that of ſetting up number againſt property. The numbers ought never to be neglected; becauſe (beſides what is due to them as men) collectively, though not individually, they have great property: they ought to have therefore protection: they ought to have ſecurity: they ought to have even conſideration: but they ought not to predominate.

My dear Sir, I have nearly done; I meant to write you a long letter; I have written a long diſſertation. I might have

have done it earlier and better. I might have been more forcible and more clear, if I had not been interrupted as I have been; and this obliges me not to write to you in my own hand. Though my hand but ſigns it, my heart goes with what I have written. Since I could think at all, thoſe have been my thoughts. You know that thirty-two years ago they were as fully matured in my mind as they are now. A letter of mine to Lord Kenmare, though not by my deſire, and full of leſſer miſtakes, has been printed in Dublin. It was written ten or twelve years ago, at the time when I began the employment, which I have not yet finiſhed, in favour of another diſtreſſed people, injured by thoſe who have vanquiſhed them, or ſtolen a dominion over them. It contained my ſentiments then; you will ſee how far they accord with my ſentiments now. Time has more and more confirmed me in them all. The preſent circumſtances fix them deeper in my mind.

I voted laſt ſeſſion, if a particular vote could be diſtinguiſhed, in unanimity, for an eſtabliſhment of the church of England *conjointly* with the eſtabliſhment which was made ſome years before by act of parliament, of the Roman Catholic, in the French conquered country of Canada. At the time of making this Engliſh eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment, we did not think it neceſſary for its ſafety, to deſtroy the former Gallican church ſettlement. In our firſt act we ſettled a government altogether monarchical, or nearly ſo. In that ſyſtem, the Canadian Catholics were far from being deprived of the advantages or diſtinctions, of any kind, which they enjoyed under their former monarchy. It is true, that ſome people, and amongſt them one eminent divine, predicted at that time, that by this ſtep we ſhould loſe our dominions in America. He foretold that the Pope would ſend his indulgences thither; that the Canadians would

would fall in with France; would declare independence, and draw or force our colonies into the ſame deſign. The independence happened according to his prediction; but in directly the reverſe order. All our Engliſh Proteſtant colonies revolted. They joined themſelves to France; and it ſo happened that Popiſh Canada was the only place which preſerved its fidelity; the only place in which France got no footing; the only peopled colony which now remains to Great Britain. Vain are all the prognoſtics taken from ideas and paſſions, which ſurvive the ſtate of things which gave riſe to them. When laſt year we gave a popular repreſentation to the ſame Canada, by the choice of the landholders, and an ariſtocratic repreſentation, at the choice of the crown, neither was the choice of the crown, nor the election of the landholders, limited by a conſideration of religion. We had no dread for the Proteſtant church, which we ſettled there, becauſe we permitted the French Catholics, in the utmoſt latitude of the deſcription, to be free ſubjects. They are good ſubjects, I have no doubt; but I will not allow that any French Canadian Catholics are better men or better citizens than the Iriſh of the ſame communion. Paſſing from the extremity of the weſt, to the extremity almoſt of the eaſt; I have been many years (now entering into the twelfth) employed in ſupporting the rights, privileges, laws and immunities of a very remote people. I have not as yet been able to finiſh my taſk. I have ſtruggled through much diſcouragement and much oppoſition; much obloquy; much calumny, for a people with whom I have no tie, but the common bond of mankind. In this I have not been left alone. We did not fly from our undertaking, becauſe the people are Mahometans or Pagans, and that a great majority of the Chriſtians amongſt them are Papiſts. Some gentlemen in Ireland, I dare ſay, have good reaſons for what they

they may do, which do not occur to me. I do not preſume to condemn them; but, thinking and acting, as I have done, towards theſe remote nations, I ſhould not know how to ſhew my face, here or in Ireland, if I ſhould ſay that all the Pagans, all the Muſſulmen, and even all the Papiſts (ſince they muſt form the higheſt ſtage in the climax of evil) are worthy of a liberal and honourable condition, except thoſe of one of the deſcriptions, which forms the majority of the inhabitants of the country in which you and I were born. If ſuch are the Catholics of Ireland,—ill-natured and unjuſt people, from our own data, may be inclined not to think better of the Proteſtants of a ſoil, which is ſuppoſed to infuſe into its ſects a kind of venom unknown in other places.

You hated the old ſyſtem as early as I did. Your firſt juvenile lance was broken againſt that giant. I think you were even the firſt who attacked the grim phantom. You have an exceeding good underſtanding, very good humour, and the beſt heart in the world. The dictates of that temper and that heart, as well as the policy pointed out by that underſtanding, led you to abhor the old code. You abhorred it, as I did, for its vicious perfection. For I muſt do it juſtice: it was a complete ſyſtem, full of coherence and conſiſtency; well digeſted and well compoſed in all its parts. It was a machine of wiſe and elaborate contrivance; and as well fitted for the oppreſſion, impoveriſhment, and degradation of a people, and the debaſement, in them, of human nature itſelf, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man. It is a thing humiliating enough, that we are doubtful of the effect of the medicines we compound. We are ſure of our poiſons. My opinion ever was (in which I heartily agreed with thoſe that admired the old code) that it was ſo conſtructed, that if there was once a breach in any eſſential part

of it; the ruin of the whole, or nearly of the whole, was, at ſome time or other, a certainty. For that reaſon I honour, and ſhall for ever honour and love you, and thoſe who firſt cauſed it to ſtagger, crack, and gape.—Others may finiſh; the beginners have the glory; and, take what part you pleaſe at this hour, (I think you will take the beſt) your firſt ſervices will never be forgotten by a grateful country. Adieu! Preſent my beſt regards to thoſe I know, and as many as I know in our country, I honour. There never was ſo much ability, or, I believe, virtue, in it. They have a taſk worthy of both. I doubt not they will perform it, for the ſtability of the church and ſtate, and for the union and the ſeparation of the people: for the union of the honeſt and peaceable of all ſects; for their ſeparation from all that is ill-intentioned and ſeditious in any of them.

BEACONSFIELD,
January 3, 1792.

FINIS.